

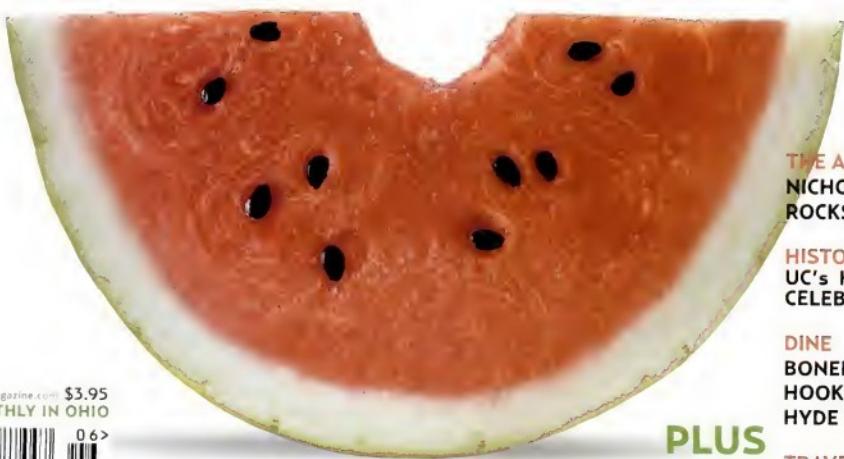
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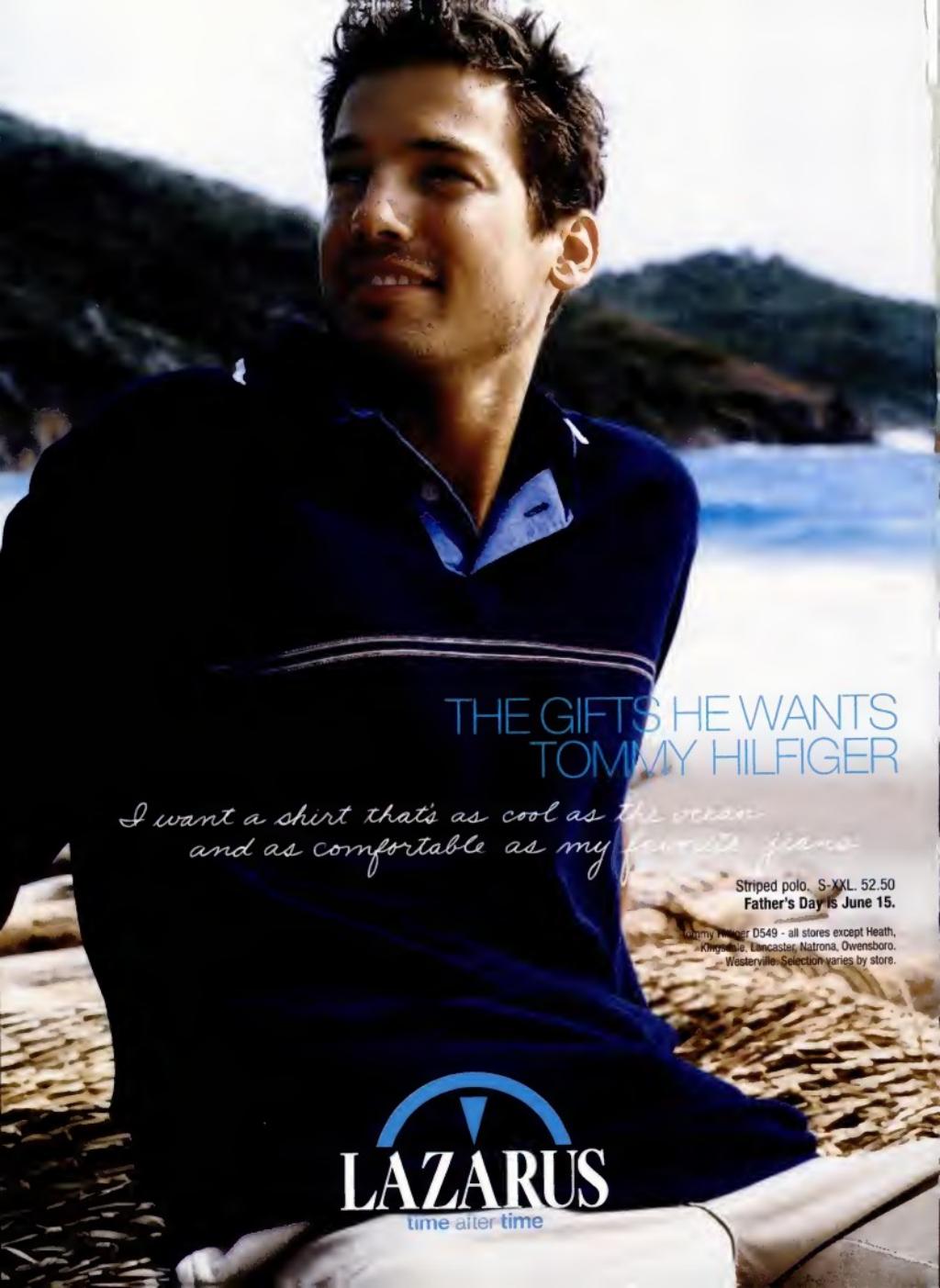
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Cincinnati Cooks gives its students not only food-prep skills but also dignity.

BY LINDA VACCARIELLO

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The 1950s were the glory days for UC's Elliston Poet-in-Residence program.

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JUN.

**COVER STORY****54****Festival Fare**

From big fat Greek festival to neighborhood parish cookout, it wouldn't be summer in Cincinnati without a fest. And what would our festivals be without food? We caught some of the best fest food in the Tri-state.



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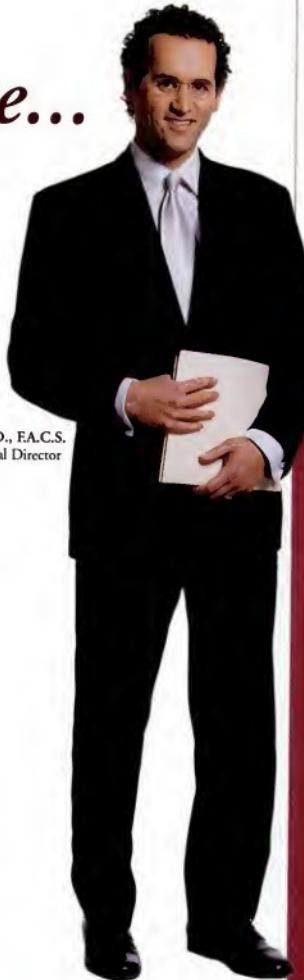
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COMING IN JULY

Hair Affair

In what's to become an annual tradition, Greater Cincinnati's top hair salons and stylists will be featured in a special section accompanied by a hair and fashion runway show called Hair Affair—including the latest hairstyles, a "before and after" extravaganza and saucy fashions. The July 27 event benefits Caracole, an agency that houses people with HIV/AIDS.

Guide to Colleges and Universities

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FRONTLINES

KITTY
MORGAN

Linda Vaccariello, a senior editor at the magazine, was warned that she might cry. In her years as a journalist she's covered plenty of tear-tugging stories, and while she knows how to tell them with great compassion, she also knows how to put the professional brakes on her sniffles. But as Linda watched the graduation of a recent class of Cincinnati Cooks, a culinary training program for people who've had a hard time finding meaningful work, it still happened. She swears she didn't full-on cry. As the graduates in their toques and white kitchen smocks collected their new sets of knives and beamed at friends and family, Linda says her eyes only brimmed with tears. (The story begins on page 68.)

And whose eyes wouldn't? For many of the graduates of Cincinnati Cooks, the program leads not just to a job but to a job to be proud of. A job that demands discipline, craft and finesse: that of a cook.

This issue is filled with cooks—men and women who prepare good food with skills sometimes learned, sometimes intuited. Do not, however, confuse the cooks in this issue with chefs.

A chef is a different animal, a thoroughbred marked by distinguished bloodlines. A cook may possess the same skills as a chef, the same arcane knowledge of ingredients—indeed, might be able to cook the clogs off a chef—but a cook doesn't make a fuss. A cook makes food for people to eat and enjoy. Period. A cook orchestrates what is perhaps the central social ritual of human life: a meal. And a cook has few pretensions—in fact, he or she is anti-pretension. I'm reminded of Fred Gary, who performs at Arnold's, downtown. Do not, he insists, call him a pianist. He's a *piano player*.

In the same way, Greg Ellerhorst is a cook. He's the leader of the guys who call themselves the Chickendales, who run the enormous chicken rotisserie at the church festivals at St. Catharine in Westwood and St. Martin of Tours in Cheviot. Ellerhorst and his crew mind their rotating chicken inferno in the midst of summer's 90-degree heat and off-the-charts humidity—and they revel in it with macho glee. When Hannah Agran, who wrote their story (page 63), complimented the Chickendales' crisp, juicy birds, they countered, "You think we'd serve bad chicken?" Spoken like true cooks.

Then there are the women of Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, who spend weeks preparing classic Greek dishes from memory then stand back to watch as thousands of people plow through the Panegyri Festival, devouring in a few hours every carefully wrapped dolma and spanakopita. At the St. Anthony of Padua Maronite Church, the women are up to their elbows in kibbee—ground beef and lamb kneaded with bulgur—and the men cook it, and everyone basks in the satisfaction of feeding a grateful crowd.

For is there a higher satisfaction than to chop and stir and fry and spoon up a bowlful of rich, fragrant food, then watch another person wipe the bowl clean? Is there a higher calling than feeding another person? Is there a better metaphor for love? ☀



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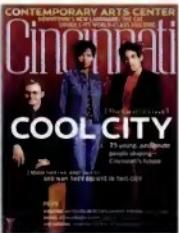
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We're too Cool

Kudos to *Cincinnati Magazine* on your May 2003 issue. Further congratulations are in order for recognizing Renata Arrington, M.D., as one of your chosen 75. Renata is the standard bearer for one of our city's greatest creative assets, the pediatric residency training program at Children's Hospital.

I was a chief resident there in the early '90s and as such, I was intimately involved in recruitment. Children's is consistently recognized as one of the top five pediatric training programs in the country. Through hard work and positive word of mouth, the program routinely attracts the best and brightest. Recent graduates are making international waves in autism research, emergency medicine, neonatology, genetics and toxicology. As we seek to keep our brightest and to attract new stars, the pediatric residency continues to bring 40 diverse, intelligent and creative individuals to our city each year. Under the prior guidance of Michael Farrell, M.D., and the current leadership of Javier Gonzalez del Rey, M.D., the Children's training program is a real success story of cultivating the Creative Class for Cincinnati.

CHRISTOPHER F. BOLLING, M.D.
Edgewood, Ky.

Older and Wiser?

Maybe it's me. Maybe, at 81, I'm too old, but I find your magazine to be snobbish, dreary, high-falutin' and way over-saturated in nonstop advertising—and most of that falls into

the same categories as above.

My start to finish time for the May issue: 12 minutes. I will be very glad when [my subscription ends].

LESTER GEIER
Blue Ash

I'll Take a Manhattan

On page 126 of your April issue, you describe a Manhattan cocktail as being made with bourbon.

However, a Manhattan is always made with blended whiskey. Bourbon, of course, is not whiskey, as any Kentuckian will confirm.

Bourbon should be sipped neat, or possibly with a little ice. Any blended whiskey must be used to make a true Manhattan.

BILL RAU
Sarasota, Fla.



MARY STAGAMAN RESPONDS:

The contents of a Manhattan are, in a word, fluid. The cocktail was originally made with rye, but who drinks rye anymore? William Grimes, author of *Straight Up or On the Rocks*, and John Mariani, who wrote *The Dictionary of American Food and Drink*, both say the drink can be made today with bourbon or blended whiskey. We like one made with Maker's Mark, bourbon by any other name.

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THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO THE QUEEN CITY

DING DONG
Photographer Ryan Kurtz visited the Verdin Company's facilities on Kellogg and Eastern Avenues. He captured a clock that would be at home in any town square, bells cast here in Cincinnati and figures (with limbs to spare) for an out-of-state glockenspiel.

EDITED BY AMANDA BOYD





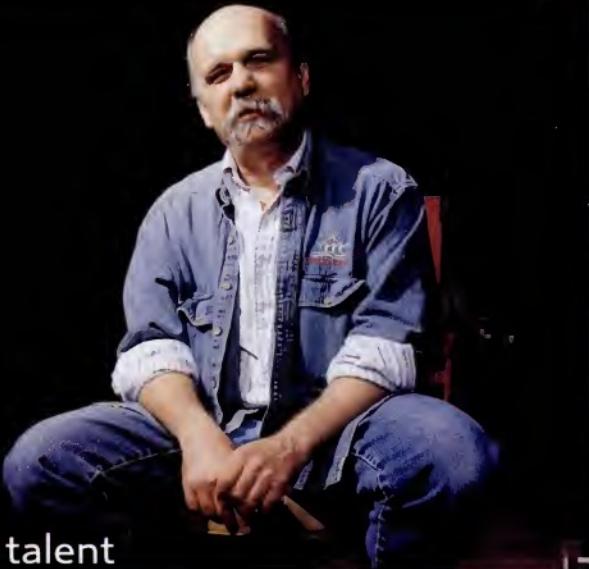


GUEST STAR

WHERE TO CATCH A SPEED DEMON

Kentucky favorite son and veteran NASCAR racer **DAVID GREEN** brings his No. 37 Timber Wolf Pontiac to Kentucky Speedway June 14th to compete in the Busch Series Meijer 300. "I live in Concord, N.C., now, and it's going to be good to get back home," says the Owensboro native. Racing is definitely in the Green family genes. Brothers Jeff and Mark also are NASCAR drivers on the Busch and Winston Cup series and occasionally race against each other. "It's pretty neat. I won the Busch Series Championship in 1994 and Jeff won it in 2000."

Since he began racing in the Busch series 12 years ago, David has won \$3.6 million (and a one-of-a-kind Gibson guitar from an April race at Nashville Superspeedway; he doesn't play). Not a bad haul for a guy whose competitive career began at age 15 when he began racing Go-Karts in his hometown • KD



local talent

PLAYING GOD

This month Michael Burnham directs Know Theatre Tribe's production of Terrence McNally's play *Corpus Christi*, a controversial modern-day retelling of Jesus' life in which he and the disciples are gay.

What kind of reaction has Know gotten for choosing the play? I think there have been around 10,000 letters protesting the production. We were getting hundreds of letters a day for a while. It has slowed. They're all from America Needs Fatima, one of the visionary Mary organizations. We've gone through the letters; very few are local.

Know performs in Salem United Church of Christ at Gabriel's Corner in Over-the-Rhine. Are they worried? The Know is separate from the church; it just rents the basement space. When we started getting the letters, we went to the church board, and they voted on whether we could do the play there. They were very supportive and wanted to continue the good relationship they had with the theater [company]. There was a woman on the board who said loudly in the meeting, "I don't know how I feel about this script, but I

get angry at people who condemn things before they've even looked at them." People who have sent the letters all say they haven't read the play and won't read it.

What do you hope people will take away from the play? When I was a kid in the 1950s, I went to Sunday School at Green Hills Presbyterian. It seemed like they were always talking about the Second Coming. There was a snide boy named Billy who sat in the back of the class and he would say things like, "And what if he comes back as a woman? And what if he comes as a Negro?" To me this play is, "And what if he comes back as a homosexual?" For the audience it becomes: Are you willing to sit and hear the story spoken that way?

Any other twists to the story? Some of the disciples are played by women. This is an interesting town. I didn't get 13 gay men to come and audition, and I beat the bushes. I could have used straight men, but they have a hard time playing gay men because they think they have to make themselves effeminate. • KATHLEEN DOANE



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2 WATER WORLD

Wilmington-based **Ferro Performance Pools** adds a new dimension to swimming laps: underwater treadmills and bikes in their pools.



3 PIGEON FORGE

The American Racing Pigeon Union visits Talawanda Middle School this month to teach students about "feathered athletes"—homing pigeons.

4 VALUE-ADDED

Last month, Covington's **Value City** got a makeover. It's the first of the company's 116 stores to be reworked—with wider aisles, bigger dressing rooms and new fixtures—into a "customer friendly shopping experience."

5 X-MEN

Xenia welcomes 3,000 riders in the **Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure** on June 17 & 18. The five days of cycling take riders 200 to 400 miles around the state.



intersection

WESTWOOD

Harrison Avenue & Boudinot Avenue

If you're the sort of Cincinnatian who seldom ventures beyond your neighborhood, you're missing out on a well-kept secret across the Harrison Avenue viaduct. In the business district along Harrison Avenue, from Westwood into Cheviot, you'll find a stretch worthy of a 1950s hometown.

The shops stocked with vintage and collectible items help set a mid-century scene, though many keep quirky hours. It's worth scheduling a visit to **EDIE'S VINTAGE ROSE ROOM** (3233 Harrison Ave.). Here you may relive—or experience for the first time—an era when women wore their Sunday best and white gloves to shop downtown. **UNIQUES** (3243 Harrison Ave.) specializes in vintage china, glassware and linens. Nurture your inner little princess at **THE LITTLE GIRL IN YOU** (3511 Harrison Ave.), a good source for doll houses, accessories and high-end dolls. Those of the masculine persuasion can pass time across the street at **PEDAL ON THE RIGHT** (3512 Harrison Ave.), a collectibles shop dedicated to the NASCAR set.

Don't miss **SCHAAF SADDLERY & LEATHER WORK** (3505 Harrison Ave.). Whether or not you're into horses, this shop is worth walking for the divine leather smell alone. Walter Berninger handcrafts custom leather goods in a shop behind his storefront, a family trade dating back centuries to his German ancestors.

At **HENKE WINERY** (3077 Harrison Ave.) Jon Henke produces wine—including his International Wine Festival-prize winning Vendage a Trois—right in the basement of the restaurant. Henke's is open for tastings, tours and dinner. There's live music on weekends in the Vineyard View Room, or ask for the Romance Room for two. For take-out Italian, **BEPO'S ITALIAN CUISINE** (3195 Harrison Ave.) sells hand-tossed pizzas and pizza shells, ravioli, antipasto and Italian deli meats and cheeses like sopressata, mortadella, locatelli and reggiano. And in the eagerly anticipated category: Chef Ron Wise, late of Iron Horse Inn, is renovating a neighborhood staple: The Beech Flats Restaurant on Harrison Avenue will undoubtedly be a new restaurant destination at an address with vintage appeal. • MARIA SCHNEIDER



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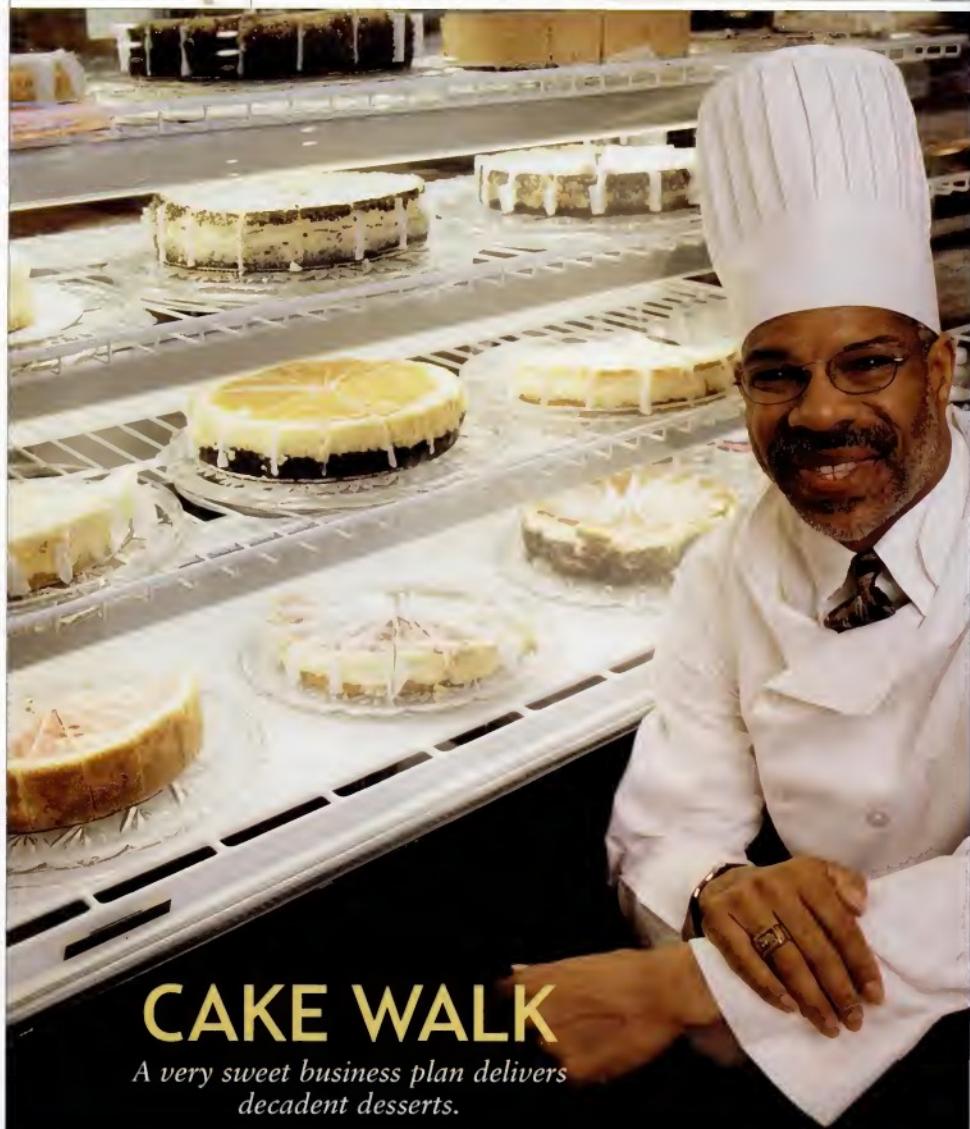
**Mike's
Express
Carwash.**

OR ORDER FROM OUR WEBSITE www.mikescarwash.com

Beechmont Ave. at Hopper Hill • Kemper Rd. in front of Costco • Fairfield on Route 4 1 mile S. of Jungle Jim's • Fields Ertel Rd. just E. of I-71

Available and Redeemable at ALL Mike's locations, limit 10 Books per customer. Offer expires June 15, 2003. Not valid with other discounts.





CAKE WALK

A very sweet business plan delivers decadent desserts.

BEST CHEESECAKE After 18 ½ years at Corning, Inc., David Phillip McMullen decided it was time for a career change. So the M.I.T. grad with an MBA from the University of Chicago made the leap to something completely different: cheesecake concocter. A baker since childhood, McMullen owns Luxury Sweets—Cheesecakes by David Phillip, at Kenwood Towne Centre. Since he's a diabetic, he can only nibble on his sugar-filled creations, but that hasn't stopped him from creating a range of cakes, including original, strawberry swirl, raspberry swirl, chocolate caramel, key lime and our favorite—the sublime chocolate marble, with thick bands of decadent chocolate throughout the rich cheesecake. Call (513) 792-0587 for more info. • **LINDA RYAN**

Think you know "best"? Send us your nominations for best of the month—and best of the city—by e-mail. Put "BEST" in the subject line and send them to cmcalendar@cintimag.emmis.com.



there's never been a
better year to **start**

SOMETHING WONDERFUL has allowed us to do what we have wanted to do for many years. Thanks to a gift from The Lois and Richard Rosenthal Foundation **FREE GENERAL ADMISSION** is now a permanent feature. Just as exciting, this milestone event has come at the same time as the opening of our dramatic **NEW CINCINNATI WING** which means the art crafted by the masters of Greater Cincinnati can always be seen by the people of Greater Cincinnati. And the world. Visit today. Enter free. Exit enriched.

CINCINNATI
 **ART**
MUSEUM
Great Art In Eden Park

For information visit us at
www.cincinnatimuseum.org
Or call 1-513-721-ARTS

FREE GENERAL ADMISSION MADE POSSIBLE BY THE LOIS AND RICHARD ROSENTHAL FOUNDATION.

THE CINCINNATI WING IS SUPPORTED BY:

GENEROUS OPERATING SUPPORT PROVIDED BY:



FineArtsFund



READING LIST

COOL CINCINNATI-RELATED BOOKS

If your teenage mermaid is looking for a good summer-time read, give her a copy of *Teenage Mermaid*, by Roselawn native Ellen Schreiber (\$15.99, Harper-Collins Children's Books). It's got a big-girl beach book storyline, modified slightly for younger readers: Surfer dude Spencer almost drowns, but the mysterious Lilly rescues him, then promptly disappears. After boy loses girl, the usual dramas ensue, but we won't spoil it for you.

Schreiber's *Vampire Kisses*, also from HarperCollins, is due out in August.

Sure, you've visited Para-

mount's Kings Island. Author Charles Infosino has, too. But the difference is that he's visited PKI so many times that park management knows him by name. That's why you should

check out Infosino's *The Unofficial Guidebook to Paramount's Kings Island* (\$10.99, Orange Frazer Press). He breaks the park down into eight sections and covers each ride, show, store, restaurant and attraction, giving readers the inside scoop on getting the most out of their visit. • AMANDA BOYD



regular guy

FIRST IN FLIGHT

Michael Flannery gets his wings.

Guess what? Sporty's Flight School at Clermont County Airport will give you an introductory lesson for \$50! You fly—that's right, actually pilot—one of their planes (with an instructor sitting next to you) for only 50 bucks. I'm scared to death of flying, but this I have to try.

My instructor is Mike Puehler. The plane is a Cessna Skyhawk. Mike says it's the Toyota Corolla of airplanes. OK, so it's no Camry, but hey—it's 50 bucks!

After the preflight safety check and a brief explanation of the controls, Mike tells me to stick my head out the window and yell "clear." I start the engine and imagine someone yanking on the propeller as I turn the key.

We taxi to the runway. (That's right, uh-huh, I'm taxiing.)

Mike's voice is suddenly in my headset. "Clermont airport is an uncontrolled airport," he says. "That means it has no tower, so I'll have to radio planes in the area that we're taking off."

I tell him that's a good idea then ask, "Could you please not use the word *uncon-*

trolled again for the rest of the flight?"

Mike laughs, but I continue, "I'd appreciate it if you could also skip *Is that smoke I smell?, water landing and jump!*"

Once I'm centered on the runway Mike says, "Give it full throttle."

The engine gets louder, the plane rattles just a bit and we speed down the runway. At Mike's word I pull back on the steering yoke and we seem to drive up an invisible hill right over the trees.

I'm flying an airplane. Mike keeps his hands on his yoke as well as an eye on the technical stuff. I enjoy the view and control the plane. We climb to 3,500 feet and fly toward the river at 160 mph. The downtown buildings look like a large crystal formation jutting straight up out of the ground. I make a slow U-turn circling them and we head back. Along the way I tip the plane hard to the right, and we look straight down through the side windows at Coney Island. Very cool.

If I never get a pilot's license at least I can say I flew all the way from Batavia to downtown—and back again.

"Dayton is the place to be in 2003."

John Glenn

Secretary General,
Inventing Flight

July 4 - 6

See over 100 balloons
at The RE/MAX®
Balloon Celebration

July 4 - 20

*Time Flies: Catch It In
The Act* – A living history
presented by Carillon
Historical Park

July 4 - 20

Explore the past and future
at Celebration Central,
with entertainment
for the whole family



A century of flight. Invented here.

Celebrate the history making achievement of the Wright Brothers™ and 100 years of flight, by visiting Inventing Flight: Dayton 2003... a spectacular, event-filled celebration of innovation. July 3 - 20 in Dayton, Ohio... the birthplace of aviation.

For tickets call **1-888-FLY-2003**. For visitor information and a brochure call **1-866-FLY-STAY**. Or visit www.inventingflight.com.



DP&L
THE ROGER RICHMAN AGENCY

July 17 - 20
See three military jet demonstration teams at the Vectren Dayton Air Show presented by Kroger

July 11 - 13
Honor the Tuskegee Airmen at the Dayton Black Cultural Festival



Glimpse the future of aviation technology from Lockheed Martin

July 18 - 19

"Pioneers of Flight"
National Aviation Hall of Fame Reunion

July 11 - 13
International Blimp Meet

INVENTING FLIGHT
DAYTON 2003

THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
PRESENTED BY

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS and other marks TM and © by The Wright Family Fund. Represented by The Roger Richman Agency, Inc. www.wrightbrothers2003.com

Ohio
much to discover



LUXURY ITEMS

Spoil yourself this summer with these small indulgences.

FIND IT Clockwise from top left: Robin's Egg French milled soaps, \$17 (Gattle's, 7809 Cooper Rd., Montgomery, 513-871-4050); turquoise suede Post-it holder, \$8 (Poeme, 3446 Michigan Ave., Hyde Park, 513-321-4999); sterling silver suitcase pillbox, \$125 (Tiffany & Co., 505 Vine St., downtown, 513-721-2022); "Change your Life" dice, \$8.75 (Poeme); Kate Spade "Andy Journal: Cocktails" with recipes, \$48 (Poeme); Jay Strongwater "Sasha" sea turtle box, \$125 (2700 Erie, 2700 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 513-533-0042); sterling silver Padova bubble blower, \$125 (Tiffany & Co.); lime candle with lid, \$27.50 (Gattle's); colored cookies, \$1.75 (Cates Bake Shop, 6927 Miami Ave., Madeira, 513-561-9866); Jean Pierre Lepine pen, \$28 (Poeme); Kate Spade business card holder, \$40 (Poeme).

Sourced and styled by designer Leah Sweeney Spurrier, who owns Lifethetics Design Studio and Store. Contact her at (513) 723-1901 or e-mail lifethetics@fuse.net.

Jennifer's Wedding House

& CHERI DE' FLEUR



WEDDINGS & PARTIES PLANNED FROM THE PLAZA IN NEW YORK
TO SEDONA, ARIZONA... AND EVERYWHERE IN BETWEEN!

We offer complete personal and experienced planning for your event.

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Also ask me about my incredible, private-labeled,
custom designed gowns—all affordably priced from \$200-\$300

WHO GETS THE TABLE?

We asked the maître d' at prominent Cincinnati restaurant: It's 8:30 on a Saturday night. You have one table left. Two parties arrive, one headed by Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Maestro



PAAVO JARVI and the other headed by Cincinnati Opera Artistic Director **NIC MUNI**. To whom do you say "right this way?"



[I'd give PAAVO the table because] we might see Nic later in the evening, after a performance. Paavo is the man of the moment. I mean, who in town gets that kind of reception, with the Bravo Paavo billboard? He's hot.

STATISTIC

16

Rank of Cincinnati on CNNMoney.com's list of 29 of America's unsafest cities with populations over 300,000.

girl scout

FRENCH TOAST

The City of Lights illuminates Cincinnati's charms.

Bonjour! While living for a month in Paris (abloom, in April!), I've been completely dependent on a map and guide book entitled *The Essential Guide to La Vie Parisienne* to help me navigate my way into the heart of Parisian life. As this is a column about Cincinnati, not Paris (!), here is the short version of my discoveries:

Writing, thinking, stretching, breathing, walking a hundred miles through Saint-Germain, Montmartre, the Marais, past a Magritte and a Picasso and a Rodin, across the Seine and the Champs-Elysées, in the company of Parisians Bruno and Damien and Cincinnatians Nick and Sarah. Oh, look, a beautiful man... *Bonjour! Au revoir!* Opera at Palais Garnier, violin under the moonlight in the shadows of Notre Dame, macaroons from Ladurée, one a day for good measure. Oh, look, a beautiful

man... *Bonjour! Au revoir!* Sunlight, cobblestone, gardens. Rain, subway, cafes. Chanel. Oh, look... *Joie de vie*, etc., etc.

OK. You get the picture.

I got to thinking, over here in Paris (!), what I would put in a guide book about Cincinnati. Here is the short version, the weekend section of *The Essential Guide to La Vie Cincinnati*.

Saturday: 1. Have breakfast at Sugar 'n Spice. Order the Popeye omelette. 2. Stop by Findlay Market. 3. Go to Riverside Drive in Covington and look across the Ohio River at Cincinnati. Take the Roebling Suspension Bridge to get there. 4. Go to Krohn Conservatory then wind around to Mt. Adams. Visit Rookwood Pottery Bistro for lunch. Walk from lunch up into Mt. Adams and view the city from Holy Cross/Immaculata Church. 5. Visit the Cincinnati Art Museum. Check out the new Cincinnati Wing. 6. See a Reds game. Eat a brat. Stand up and sing at the seventh inning stretch. 7. Stop by Arnold's for a drink after the game. Stand at the bar with the regulars.

Sunday: 1. Eat at Tucker's in Over-the-Rhine. 2. Go to Old St. Mary's Church, listen to mass in German. 3. Have Cincinnati chili for lunch. (I'm a Skyline girl myself, but Gold Star will do just fine.) Order a 3-, 4- or 5-way, your choice. 4. Go see the Cincinnati in Motion exhibition at the Cincinnati History Museum at Union Terminal. Stand a person by each drinking fountain in the rotunda and talk to each other. Cool! 5. Go to Primavista in Price Hill for dinner and the awesome city view. 6. Find Graeter's. Eat ice cream (I recommend mint chocolate chip.)

There you have it, all the essentials for *la vie Cincinnati*—with one exception. If I've missed anything here in Paris (!), it is my friends and family back home, the people of Cincinnati. So on your journey through our fair city, make sure to talk to the locals. The language is easy to pick up and the people are the best you'll find anywhere. *Au revoir!* • STACY SIMS





We would if we could.

At JP Flooring, we have a lot of ideas for beautifying Cincinnati – and we'd like to start with your home. JP Flooring has the widest selection of commercial and residential flooring in the Midwest. Our 20,000 square foot showroom is filled with many ways to beautify your floors. With carpeting, hardwood, ceramic tile, laminates, vinyl and area rugs, you're sure to find just the right color, design and style for every taste and budget. We've got Cincinnati covered.



J P FLOORING
Systems, Inc.



Hot Rod

Change gears with a quick excursion to the Corvette capital of the world.

On my drive to Bowling Green, Ky., to visit the National Corvette Museum, I worried that I would feel a little conspicuous—if not outright blasphemous—pulling into the parking lot in my highly unluxurious Toyota. After all, I was venturing into the “Corvette Capital of the World,” where this high-performance, American-made sports car is zealously revered and celebrated. Corvettes are all about speed and luxury—priced at roughly \$50,000 and holding only two passengers. But while I couldn’t park in the “Corvettes Only” section of the parking lot, I was relieved to discover that you don’t have to be a tool-toting gearhead to be fascinated by this car-culture hot spot located less than four hours southwest of Cincinnati.

The National Corvette Museum sits right off I-65, just five minutes north of downtown, and is within a quarter-mile of the General Motors Bowling Green Assembly Plant, where every Corvette manufactured since 1981 has been made. The museum’s 12-story red spire, which sits atop its yellow “skydome” roof, has become an architectural landmark in Bowling Green, luring travelers—general car buffs as well as automotive neophytes yearning for a break from the road—off I-65 and into the 68,000-square-foot building that houses more than 60 Corvettes from every era of the car’s history.

The big buzz in Bowling Green this summer is the Corvette’s 50th anniversary celebration, June 24–30. Hordes of Corvette fanatics from around the world will stream into Bowling Green, many of them—12,000 or more—as part of the National Corvette Caravan, a meticulously orchestrated convergence of Corvette owners driving in from the farthest reaches of the continental U.S. (and even some from abroad, who are shipping their ‘vettes to the States for the event). The official celebration takes place in Nashville June 27 and 28, but the museum will host events all week. The 2004 Corvette will be on display, as will one model from every year of Corvette production. Bowling Green hotel rooms have been booked for months, but if you drive down for the anniversary and can squeeze your car into the parking lot among thousands of Corvettes, you’ll certainly get a feel for the fanaticism surrounding this sporty little ride.

The museum itself, though, is open year-round, so if the anniversary hoopla is a bit over-the-top for your taste, visit before or after the week-long blowout—especially if you want to tour the assembly plant, which is booked solid with preregistered ‘vette owners.

And you *will* want to visit the assembly plant. The one-hour, half-mile tour follows the path of a luxuriously slow conveyor-belt parade of coupes, convertibles and high-performance models in ever-evolving stages



BY JENNY WOHLFARTH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICARDO LEMOS



HEAVY METAL
The Corvette's familiar curvy silhouette shows up everywhere in Bowling Green's National Corvette Museum.



ITINERARY

WHERE TO STAY,
WHAT TO DO

1 CORVETTE MUSEUM

350 Corvette Dr.,
(800) 53-VETTE,
www.corvettemuseum.com
Daily 8 am–5 pm (CT)
Admission: \$8 (adult)



2 SLEEP HERE

1869 Homestead B&B
212 Mizpah Rd.,
(270) 842-0510,
www.1869homestead.com
Innkeeper Jan Strode's
husband, Wendell, is
executive director of the
National Corvette Museum.
Rooms \$69–\$89

3 PLANT TOURS

Bowling Green Assembly
Plant, (270) 745-8419
Weekday tours are free (9 am
and 1 pm CT); you must wear
closed-toe shoes.

4 GOOD EATS

Mariah's Restaurant
801 State St.,
(270) 842-6878,
www.mariyahs.com
American fare in Bowling
Green's oldest standing
brick structure.

Lost River Cave (866-274-CAVE, www.lostrivercave.com)
has one of the largest cave
openings in the Eastern U.S.
Admission: \$9.50 (adult)

of production. I was mesmerized on my tour. A dismembered yellow door passed by high over our heads; within an arm's reach in front of us were boxes of shiny silver bolts and screws, but no one dared to reach out to fingerprint even the tiniest parts of these revered machines. The guide on our tour explained that this is one of the smallest and slowest assembly plants in the automotive industry: The conveyors move at the rate of one-half mile per hour; one car rolls off the assembly line every 3.1 minutes. It occurred to me as I ambled along the pathway that this is the only time I'll ever out-walk a Corvette.

Among the group of Corvette fanatics touring the plant with me was Christina, an 18-year-old diehard devotee from Arkansas. The self-professed "biggest Corvette fan in the world" made her mom drive 500 miles out of their way to visit this plant. At one station near the end of the production line, an employee pulled Christina aside and invited her to turn the ignition key for the first time on a Z06, Corvette's high-performance model, which can reach a speed of 180 mph. Christina bubbled over with bliss.

The tour culminated in the "Dynamic Vehicle Test," where each newly assembled car takes a simulated highway drive over mechanical floor rollers. Then it's off to the showers—each car is doused in a shower cell to make sure it's leakproof—and another Corvette rolls into reality with a nearly baptismal moment of birth.

Back at the museum, I spent a few hours ogling 'vettes up close, and I began to understand the car's allure. The Corvette is sensuous and seductive, with its flawlessly contoured fiberglass body, wraparound windshield and that raw, throaty voice of its powerful V-8 engine. And in its 50-year history, the car has hardly deviated from its original concept.



OFF-TRACK BETTING Tired of all things 'vette? There's more to do in Bowling Green. Visit Last River Cave for a boat tour (above) or grab a bite at Mariah's (below).

My tour of the museum took me through that 50-year history. "Nostalgia Alley" features rare vintage models; there's also a 1950s era service station, a snazzy high-performance rotunda, and the Corvette "nursery," where cars await the arrival of their owners, who have selected this VIP option to "meet" their new cars. Among the museum's vintage treasures: a rare 1963 split-window Sting Ray coupe owned by Cincinnatians Gary and Sharon Mortimer; the only 1983 Corvette in existence (yes, only one Corvette was manufactured that year); a crazy-wicked Indy Corvette concept car on loan from GM; and the official Corvette pace cars for the Indy 500 in 1978, 1986, 1995, 1998 and 2002.

After looking at 'vettes all day, I was certainly impressed, but it wasn't until I actually sat in one—a 1998 torch-red convertible (list price: \$44,425)—that I fully appreciated their appeal. The driver's seat felt more comfortable than any living-room recliner I've ever sat in; I felt enveloped in ergonomic euphoria, my legs fully extended, the car wrapped around my body's contours like it was custom-made for my dimensions. "Look at me," I thought, peering over the near-eye-level door, feeling like a commercial of myself. The buzz of self-indulgence hummed in my head (or was that the wind in my hair?).

At the end of the day, I'm not sure I was a Corvette convert, but it was sobering climbing back into that Toyota for the drive home. **G**

Classic & Vintage CARSHOW

Featuring Corvette



Concours d'Elegance at Ault Park
Benefiting the Arthritis Foundation

Sunday, June 8, 2003
Ault Park; Cincinnati, OH
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

www.ohioconcours.com
(513) 271-4545

Presented by

Provident
Bank 

Photo courtesy of Wendt Worldwide • 1957 Fuel-injected Corvette
Car owner Jim Jaeger • Printing donated by Miami Systems, Inc.

25

CALENDAR GIRL
Amanda Boyd has sussed out the best ways to amuse yourself this month, and **ARTS EDITOR** Kathleen Doane has noted a few must-sees, indicated with stars: ★

For further calendar listings see page 34.

Take a dive without leaving town: **Coral Reef Adventure's** playing at Museum Center's OMNIMAX.

Museum Center At Union Terminal
(513) 287-7000

Yeah, it's hard to wrap your tongue around **Concours d'Elegance**, but the fancy cars at Ault Park are definitely easy on the eyes.

★
Arthritis Foundation
(513) 271-4545

Pick up a tie for dad—it's Father's Day!



Stop by Joseph-Beth tonight and join in the discussion of this month's articles at **Cincinnati Magazine Monday**.

Cincinnati Magazine
(513) 421-4300

1

8



2

9

If you missed it during Holocaust Awareness Week, you have until Friday to see **Her Story Must Be Told**, which celebrates local survivors, at Hebrew Union College.

Hebrew Union College
(513) 221-1875

10

17

Explore Ohio art at the Fitton Center's **State of the Arts: A Celebration of Ohio's Rich Artistic Heritage**, part of Ohio's bicentennial celebrations.

Fitton Center
(513) 863-8873

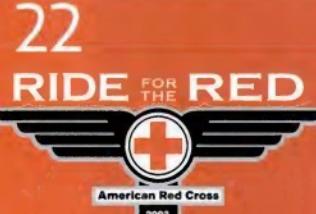
16

The CSO's **Bach and Beyond** series is back at CCM for another summer. This week's all Bach, all the time.

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
(513) 381-3300

Hop on your Harley and support the Red Cross at the second annual **Ride for the Red**, starting and ending at Turway Park.

Cincinnati Red Cross
(513) 579-3085



Get out and enjoy summer's beauty at the Lebanon Garden Tour, sponsored by the Lebanon Council of Garden Clubs.

★
Lebanon Council of Garden Clubs
(513) 932-5430

29

Who needs a day off? You do. Play hooky today and go to **The Beach Waterpark**. ▶

The Beach Waterpark
(513) 398-SWIM (7946)

30



Send your kids back in time (well, not really) with the **Pioneer to the Past Day Camp** at Dinsmore Homestead in Burlington.

Dinsmore Homestead
(659) 586-6117

24

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

The Fountain Square Book Sale gets by all this week with a lot of help from the Friends of the Public Library.



Friends of the Public Library
(513) 369-6035

Gotta sing? Then visit the **Seven Hills Chorus Guest Night**, for ladies who love to sing, at Valley Temple in Wyoming.

4

His grandmother was the first African-American board president of Cincinnati's YWCA, and **Brian Joiner's Black Women paintings** celebrate her and other women of color who've helped the organization.



YWCA of Greater Cincinnati
(513) 241-7090

5

Tonight at the Aronoff, **Choreographers Without Companies** lets local dance designers show us their stuff.



Aronoff Box Office
(513) 621-2787

6

Need a family friendly activity today? Head down to Sawyer Point for the Meijer/Mix 94.1 **Kidsfest**.

7

Seven Hills Show Chorus
(513) 333-5426

11

If you know what's good for you, you'll visit Newport for **Italianfest 2003**. It's an offer you can't refuse, *capisce?*

12 33 USA



1999

City of Newport
(859) 292-5666

Tonight, Cincinnati Opera presents **Turandot**, the story of a princess whose suitors are killed if they can't answer her riddles. And you thought your last date was bad.

Cincinnati Opera
(513) 241-2742



18

When You Wish Upon a Fish at Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park is not a Dr. Seuss story. It is a mix of puppets, fairy tales and audience participation.

25

Revisit high school (minus teenage anxiety) with Showboat Majestic's **Is There Life After High School?** musical revue.



Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park
(513) 887-9514

19

Party animals can party among the animals at tonight's **Zoo CREW Rendezvous**, which benefits the Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife.



Cincinnati Zoo
(513) 475-6124

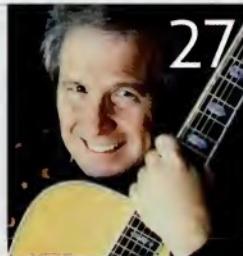
20

Get dirty for a good cause—play mud volleyball at East Fork State Park to benefit the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Cincinnati.

21

Epilepsy Foundation
(513) 721-2905

26

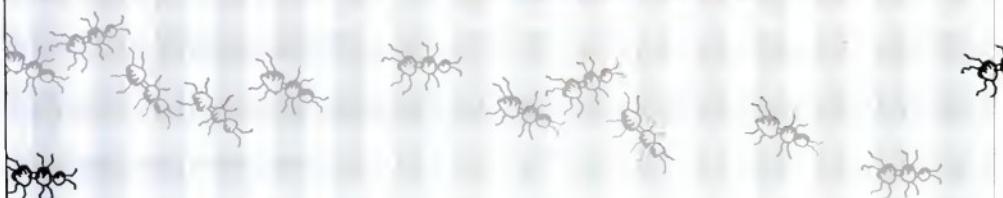


27

Mr. American Pie himself (no, not Jason Biggs), **Don McLean**, joins the Pops at Riverbend.

28

Cincinnati Pops
(513) 381-5300



JUNE

HAVE AN EVENT TO LIST IN THE CALENDAR? Here's what we need: date, time, address, cost, general description and a daytime phone number. Calendar deadline is **EIGHT WEEKS** prior to issue date (September items are due July 1). **MAIL** to Cincinnati Magazine, Calendar Editor, One Centennial Plaza, 705 Central Ave., Suite 175, Cincinnati, OH 45202. **FAX** 513-562-2746. **E-MAIL** cmcalendar@cintimag.emmis.com
EDITED BY JENNY DAPPER

special events

CELTIC HERITAGE DAY

June 1: Featuring vendors, live music and performances by the McGing Irish Dancers and Cincinnati Highland Dancers. Sun 1-8 pm. Miami Whitewater Forest, 9001 Mt. Hope Rd., Harrison, (513) 521-7275.

MORGAN'S LITTLE MIAMI TRIATHLON

June 1: Bike 18 miles, run six and canoe six more and you can call yourself the Ironman of the Little Miami. **Tickets:** \$90 per team. Morgan's Canoe Livery, Oregonia, (513) 932-7658 or (800) WE CANOE.

SUMMERFAIR

Thru June 1: The 36th annual nationally acclaimed festival of food, arts, music and crafts. Proceeds from Summerfair support local artist and arts organizations. **Tickets:** \$6-\$7. Fri 2-8 pm, Sat 10 am-8 pm, Sun 10 am-5 pm. Coney Island, 6201 Kellogg Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 232-8230.

CINCINNATI MAGAZINE MONDAY

June 2: Join staff and contributors to talk about the stories in this issue of *Cincinnati Magazine*. Mon 7 pm. Joseph-Beth Booksellers, 2692 Madison Rd., Norwood, (513) 421-4300.

FRIENDS' 31ST ANNUAL USED BOOK & RECORD SALE

June 2: More than 50,000 used books, records, CDs, videos and collectibles for sale from the Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County. Mon & Wed 9:30 am-7:30 pm, Tues 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Thurs 9:30 am-3 pm. Fountain Square, downtown, (513) 369-6035.

MEIJER KIDSFEST

June 7 & 8: Presented by MIX 94.1, featuring carnival rides, dog shows, three stages of entertainment and pro sports players. Sat 8 am-11 am-5 pm. Sawyer Point, downtown, (513) 763-MIXX.

ETC TONY AWARDS PARTY

June 8: Celebrate the 57th annual Tony Awards with Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati, featuring cocktails, dinner, entertainment and live broadcast of the awards. **Tickets:** \$35-\$200. Sun 5:30

pm-11:30 pm. East Club Room, Paul Brown Stadium, 1 Paul Brown Stadium, downtown, (513) 421-3555.

FAMOUS FACES CHARITY AUCTION

June 8: Featuring original artworks by local artists, with signed portraits of Ken Griffey Jr., Barry Larkin and Sean Casey. Sun 5-8 pm. Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., 100 S. Martin Luther King Blvd., Hamilton, (513) 844-2787.

CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

June 8: 26th annual classic car show to benefit the Arthritis Foundation. **Tickets:** \$20. Sun 10 am-4 pm. Ault Park, Hyde Park, (513) 271-4545.

GERMAN DAY

June 8: Sponsored by the German-American Citizens' League of Greater Cincinnati. **Tickets:** \$2. Sun noon-9 pm. Donaushwaben Park, 4290 Dry Ridge Rd., Bevis, (513) 851-9549.

KIDS SUMMER SERIES 2003

June 11 & 12: Creek Exploring. **Tickets:** \$1.50-\$3. Wed & Thurs 10:30 am-noon. Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park and Museum, 1763 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton, (513) 887-9514.

CLOVERNOOK CENTER 100TH ANNIVERSARY

June 12: Celebrate the 100th birthday of the Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Thurs 11 am-2 pm. Fountain Square, downtown, (513) 728-6274.

ITALIANFEST 2003

June 12-15: The region's largest Italian festival, featuring food from area restaurants, opera, golf outing and a 5k run. Thurs-Sun 5 pm. Riverboat Row, Newport, (859) 292-3666.

ANNUAL 5K RUN FOR KIDS

June 13: Presented by the Cincinnati Bar Association to benefit Cincinnati's ProKids. **Tickets:** \$10-\$25. Fri 5:30 pm. St. Mary's Church, 2853 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 381-8213.

ALL-PRO SERIES KENTUCKY 150

June 13: Plus the Busch Series Pole Night. **Tickets:** \$35. Fri 7 pm. Kentucky Speedway, 4760 Sparta Pike, Sparta, (888) 652-RACE.

WOMEN'S VOICES FROM THE HOLOCAUST

Thru June 13: *Her Story Must Be Told*, a traveling exhibition created for Holocaust Awareness Week, presents the stories of 13 local women who survived the Holocaust. **Hours:** Mon-Fri 9-5, Mayerson Hall, Hebrew Union College, 3101 Clifton Ave., Clifton, (513) 221-1875.

HOMEARAMA

June 14-29: Check out the luxurious homes at Vista Pointe at River's Bend in South Lebanon. **Tickets:** adults \$8, children under 12 free with adult admission. Sponsored by HBA of Greater Cincinnati, (513) 851-6300.

SHANDON OLD-FASHIONED STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

June 14: The 78th annual festival, features outdoor vendors, artists, live music and, of course,

strawberries. Sat 10 am-7 pm. Community House, State Route 126 West, Shandon, (513) 738-2962.

FISHING DERBY

June 14: Kids' event with prizes for largest fish and most fish caught. **Tickets:** \$1.50-\$4. Sat 10:30-11:30 am. Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park and Museum, 1763 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton, (513) 887-9514.

FT. ANCIENT CELEBRATION

June 14-15: 13th annual event, *A Gathering of Four Directions*. **Tickets:** \$2-\$6. Sat 11 am-7 pm, Sun noon-6 pm. Fort Ancient State Park, 6123 State Route 350, Oregonia, (513) 932-4421.

BUSCH SERIES MEIJER 300

June 14: One of the Busch Grand National Division's most coveted trophies. **Tickets:** \$45-\$75. Sat 7 pm. Kentucky Speedway, 4760 Sparta Pike, Sparta, (888) 652-RACE.

ANTIQUE TRACTOR SHOW AND BELLEVUE BAPTIST DAYS

June 14 & 15: Antique farm equipment and a special bicentennial celebration of the Bellevue Baptist Church. Sat & Sun 1-5 pm. Dinsmore Homestead, 6556 Burlington Pke., Burlington, (859) 586-6117.

CRAISIN' ON MAIN

June 18: A monthly car show featuring live music, door prizes and antique and classic cars. Wed 5-8:30 pm. Second St., Aurora, Ind., (812) 926-4334.

RED CROSS BIKE'S BALL

June 20: The second annual ball featuring silent and live auctions, live music, food and drinks. **Tickets:** \$100-\$175. Fri 7 pm-midnight. East Club Lounge, Paul Brown Stadium, 1 Paul Brown Stadium, downtown, (513) 579-3085.

ZOO CREW RENDEZVOUS

June 20: *Jammin' in the Jungle-Tropical Style*. Proceeds of the fifth annual event benefit the Zoo's Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife. **Tickets:** adults \$25-\$50. Fri 7 pm-midnight. Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, 3400 Vine St., Avondale, (513) 475-6124.

22ND ANNUAL USED BOOK & RECORD SALE

June 20-22: Presented by the Anderson Library Committee. Fri 9 am-9 pm, Sat 10 am-5 pm, Sun noon-4 pm. Anderson Branch Library, 7450 State Rd., Anderson Twp., (513) 369-4573.

SUMMER SOLSTICE SUNRISE PROGRAM

June 21: Watch the sun rise through an opening in the earthworks. Sat 5:30 am. Ft. Ancient State Park, 6123 State Route 350, Oregonia, (513) 932-4421.

SUMMER SOLSTICE SOIREE

June 21: Join Club 316, the Taft Museum of Art's young professionals group, at the Cincinnati Observatory Center for an evening of fun benefiting the Taft's capital campaign. **Tickets:** \$35 single, \$60 couple. Sat 8-midnight. Cincinnati Observatory Center, 3489 Observatory Place, Hyde Park, (513) 241-0343, ext. 24.

MUD VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

June 21: Presented by the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. Gather your team and get ready for down-and-dirty fun. Sat 8:30 am. East Fork State Park Beach Area, 2505 Williamsburg-Bantam Rd., Bantam, (513) 721-2905.

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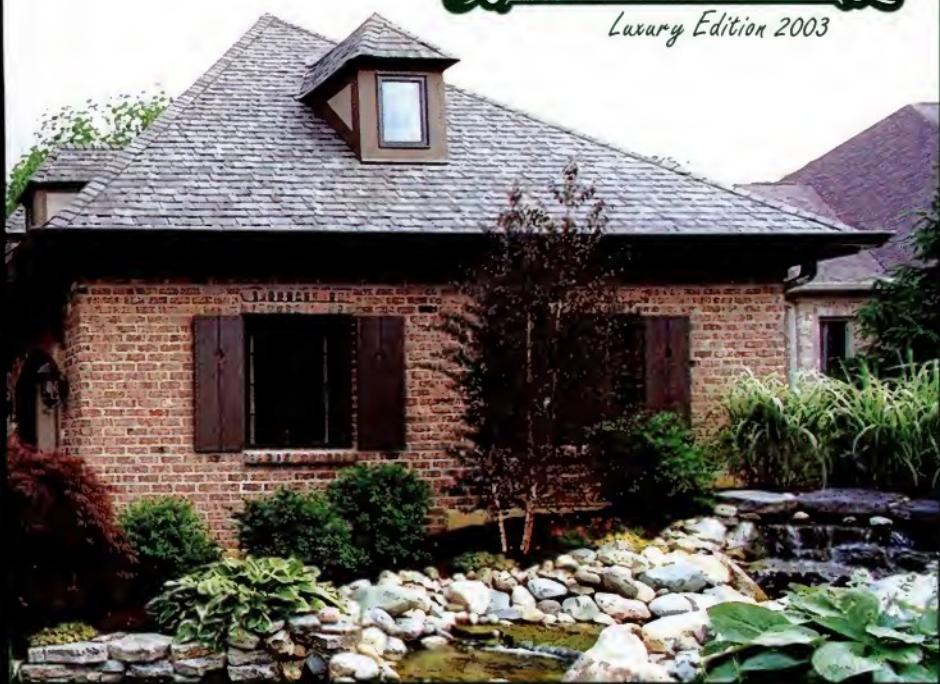
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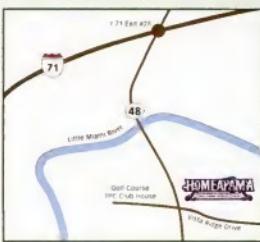


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EAST ROW GARDEN WALK

June 21 & 22: Eleven gardens in the East Row Historic District in Newport will be on display, to benefit Health Steps. **Tickets:** adults \$15, children 12 and under free. Sat & Sun 10 am-4 pm. Watertower Square, Sixth & Washington Sts., Newport, (513) 588-4600.

RIDE FOR THE RED

June 22: The Cincinnati Area Chapter of the American Red Cross presents its second annual fund-raiser. **Tickets:** \$25 per motorcycle. Sun 11 am, Turfway Park, 7500 Turfway Rd., Florence, (513) 579-3085.

BUTTERFLY SHOW

Thru June 22: A floral setting features 75 different free flight butterfly species from around the world. **Tickets:** \$3-\$5. Seven days 10 am-5 pm. Krohn Conservatory, 1501 Eden Park Dr., Walnut Hills (513) 352-4080.

PIONEER TO THE PAST DAY CAMP

June 23-27: For children who have completed grades K-5. **Tickets:** nonmembers \$85, members \$75. Mon-Fri 9 am-noon. Dinsmore Homestead, 5656 Burlington Pike, Burlington, (859) 586-6117.

LEBANON GARDEN TOUR

June 28-29: Lebanon homes open their unusual gardens to the public. **Tickets:** \$5. Sat & Sun 11 am-5 pm. Lebanon Council of Garden Clubs, 198 S. Broadway, Lebanon, (513) 932-3430.

ZOO BABIES

Thru June 29: The Cincinnati Zoo celebrates the many births of its animal residents. **Tickets:**

\$6-\$11.50. Mon-Fri 9 am-5 pm, Sat & Sun 9 am-6 pm. Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, 3400 Vine St., Avondale, (513) 281-4700.

READQUEST 2003

Thru July 31: The Public Library's 30th annual summer reading program for kids and adults. Win prizes for reading books. Check your local branch or www.CincinnatiLibrary.org for more information. Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, 800 Vine St., downtown, (513) 369-6900.

**STICK YOUR NECK OUT:
A JOURNEY TO THE SEA**

Thru August 31: The new turtle exhibition at Newport Aquarium. **Tickets:** \$10-\$16. Seven days 10am-6 pm. Newport Aquarium, 1 Aquarium Way, Newport, (859) 491-FINS.

THE BEACH WATERPARK

Thru Sept 7: With more than 40 rides and attractions. The Beach is the largest waterpark in Ohio. The Beach offers something for everyone, from Aztec Adventure, the only Water Roller Coaster in the Midwest, to Splash Mountain for the little ones. **Tickets:** \$9-\$25. Seven days, 10 am-9 pm. 2590 Waterpark Dr., Mason, (800) 886-7946, www.thebeachwaterpark.com.

BATS INCREDIBLE

Thru Oct 3: Three-dimensional sculptures made out of baseball bats decorate the streets around Fountain Square to commemorate the opening of Great American Ball Park. Produced by Artworks, (513) 333-0388, www.batsincredible.com.

art galleries**ART ACADEMY OF CINCINNATI GALLERIES**

June 6: Graduating Seniors Exhibition. **June 6-13:** Master of Arts in Art Education Faculty Exhibition. Exo Gallery. **June 12-July 3:** Community Education Exhibition. Chidlaw Gallery. **Hours:** Mon-Thurs 9-9, Fri 9-5, Sat & Sun noon-5. 951 Eden Park Dr., Walnut Hills, (513) 562-8777.

DAAP GALLERIES

June 2-6: Angela Hed, Brent Dedas, Mark Hanavan. **Hours:** Mon-Fri 11 am-4 pm. 314 W. Fourth St., downtown, (513) 381-0603. **June 2-6:** First Year MFA Candidates III. Edwards Center Gallery, 6th Floor, 1 Edwards Center, UC Main Campus, Clifton, (513) 556-3088.

ENJOY THE ARTS

Thru June 20: Miami University Students exhibition. **June 27-July 18:** Trelan Jones, paintings. **June 27:** Final Friday Gallery Walk. **Hours:** Final Fridays 6-10 pm, Mon-Fri 9-5. 1338 Main St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 621-4700.

FITTON CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS

June 2-July 26: A State of the Arts: A Celebration of Ohio's Rich Artistic Heritage. Mon-Thurs 9 am-8 pm, Sat 9 am-noon. 101 S. Monument Ave., Hamilton, (513) 863-8873.

MILLER GALLERY

June 1-30: New paintings by Ackrill, Akhriev and Droege. **Hours:** Mon-Wed 10 am-5:30 pm, Thurs & Fri 10 am-8 pm, Sat 10 am-5:30 pm,

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Sun 11 am-4 pm, 2715 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 871-4420.

REYNE GALLERY

Thru July 7: Curves: Sculptures of painted stainless steel by Bret Price. *Hours:* Mon-Fri 10 am-6 pm, Sat 10 am-4 pm, 17 E. Eighth St., 3rd Floor, downtown, (513) 651-4198.

ROW HOUSE GALLERY

June 1-30: Soaring Skyward. *Hours:* Mon-Fri 10 am-5 pm, Sat 10 am-4 pm, 211 Main St., Milford, (513) 831-7230.

LINDA SCHWARTZ GALLERY

Thru June 21: Welcome! Featuring works by Louis Zelander Bickert, Keith Benjamin, Thomas C. DeLisle, Mark Fox, Stewart Goldmark, Theresa Hackett, Mick O'Shea, Joel Otterson, Joey Versoza and Richard Wearn. *June 27-Aug 2:* Richard Wearn, Russel Huley, video installation. *Hours:* Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-4 and by appointment. 315 W. Fourth St., downtown, (513) 241-4202.

CARL SOLWAY GALLERY

Thru Aug 29: Video +. *Hours:* Mon-Fri 9 am-5 pm, 424 Findlay St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 621-0069.

THROWING CLAY POTTERY

Thru June 20: Clay in the Garden. *Hours:* Tues-Sat 11 am-5 pm, 4719 Vine St., St. Bernard, (513) 242-7687.

WESTON ART GALLERY

June 13-Aug 31: Kovergence: Site-Specific Installation by Susan Ewing & Vratislav Novak. *Jour-*

ney: Multimedia Installation by Karen Snouffer. *Hours:* Tues-Sat 10 am-5:30 pm, until 8 pm performance nights; Sun noon-5 pm, until 7 pm performance nights. Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 977-4165.

YWCA WOMEN'S ART GALLERY

Thru June 13: Brian Joiner's *Black Women series.* *Hours:* Mon-Sat 8 am-6 pm, 898 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 241-0790.

MUSEUMS

CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM

June 18-Sept 14: A Brush with Nature: The Gere Collection of Landscape Oil Sketches. Painted directly from nature, these exquisite small sketches offer a glimpse of artists sharpening their skills.

Thru Aug 3: Making Their Mark: Drawings and Watercolors by Cincinnati Artists. This selection of 100 drawings, watercolors and pastels from the Museum's extensive holdings of work by Cincinnati artists complements the Cincinnati Wing. *Thru Sept 12: Extraordinary Gifts: Selected Paintings from the Procter & Gamble Company.* *Thru Sept 19: Out at Home: The Negro Baseball League.* *Hours:* Tues, Thurs, Fri 11-5, Wed 11-9, Sat 10-5, Sun noon-6. Tour groups only Tues-Fri 9-11. *Admission:* adults \$5, seniors/college students \$4, free to members and children under 17, free on Sat. Gift shop, 953 Eden Park Dr., Walnut Hills, (513) 721-ARTS (2787).

CINCINNATI MUSEUM CENTER

Robert D. Lindner Family OMNIMAX

Thru June 2: Coral Reef Adventure. *June 6, 13, 20*

& 27: Ring of Fire. Part of the Friday Classic Film series at the OMNIMAX, this 1991 movie stars active volcanoes. Fri 8 pm. *June 14-Oct 3: Pulse: A STOMP Odyssey.* Guided by the internationally claimed performers of the stage show STOMP, catch the beat of percussion groups from various backgrounds. *June 14-Oct 3: Kilimanjaro: To the Roof of Africa.* Follow five adventurers through the rugged terrain and extreme conditions to the highest point in Africa. Omnimax times: Mon 1, 2, & 3 pm; Tues-Thurs 1, 2, 3, 7, & 8 pm; Fri 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, & 9 pm; Sat 11 am-9 pm hourly, Sun 11am-6 pm hourly. Open daily.

Cincinnati History Museum

Thru Sept 2: Liberty on the Border: The Civil War and the Ohio River Valley. Special exhibitions and galleries.

Cincinnati Historical Society Library

Mon-Fri noon-5, Sat 10-5. 287-7030.

Museum of Natural History & Science

Exhibitions cover a variety of natural history topics. *Thru Aug 24: Inside Africa,* produced by Clear Channel Exhibitions in collaboration with the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, explores the diversity of the world's second largest continent. Discover the many facets of Africa its people, lands, rich cultural history and stories. Through interactive displays, multimedia presentations and a collection of African artifacts, the exhibit encompasses the broad range of African geography, societies and political systems.

Cinergy Children's Museum

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Lexington, KY 800-678-8813 www.kyhorsepark.com

Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 11-6. **Admission:** adults \$6.75 for one museum; children 3-12 \$4.75 for one museum; children 1-2 \$3.75 for all museums and traveling exhibits for one day; children under 1 free. Museum Center, 1301 Western Ave., West End, (513) 287-7000.

Miami University Art Museum

Thru Aug 1: Picasso, Albers and Giacometti are featured in an exhibition of recent acquisitions to the Miami University Art Museum permanent collection. Highlights also include a Toulouse-Lautrec lithograph, a color photograph by Cindy Sherman, and two Japanese folding screens. **June 3-Aug 1:** *Paperworks: Piero Dorazio.* Vigorous and elegant, Dorazio's work has been the subject of studies and exhibitions around the world. Mon-Sat noon-5 pm. 801 S Patterson Ave., Oxford, (513) 529-2232.

music

122nd ARMY NATIONAL GUARD BAND

June 29: Bring chairs, food and drinks to enjoy this concert on the lawn. **Tickets:** adults \$4, children \$1.50. Sun 7 pm. Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park and Museum, 1763 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton, (513) 887-9514.

CENTERVILLE CONCERT BAND

June 21: Part of the Village of Waynesville Summer Concert Series, which continues through August. Sat 7-9 pm. Amphitheater in Bicentennial Park, 837 Dayton Rd., Waynesville, (513) 897-8015.

CINCINNATI CHORAL SOCIETY

June 1 & 8: *A Celebration of America in Song.*

Tickets: \$6-\$12. Sun, June 1, 7:30 pm; Sun, June 8, 2:30 pm. **June 1:** St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, 10345 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery. **June 8:** New Thought Unity Center, 1401 McMillan St., Walnut Hills, (513) 784-2379.

CINCINNATI POPS ORCHESTRA

June 13 & 14: *Pops Favorites Series: A Gershwin Celebration.* Erich Kunzel conducts. **Tickets:** \$17-\$42. Fri & Sat 8 pm. **June 28:** PNC Headliners Series, featuring Don McLean. Erich Kunzel conducts. **Tickets:** \$18-\$42. Sat 8 pm. Riverbend Music Center, Kellogg Ave. exit off I-275, Anderson Twp., (513) 381-3300. **June 25:** Union Central Life Insurance's 14th Annual Concert on the Green, featuring Broadway hits and tenor Steven Morgan. Wed 8 pm. Union Central Life Insurance Company Grounds, 1876 Waycross Rd., Forest Park, (513) 381-3300.

CINCINNATI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

June 8: Sundae with the Symphony. John Morris Russell conducts *At the Movies Spectacular*, featuring classical pieces that appeared in *Fantasia*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, *Amadeus*, *Shine*, *Apocalypse Now*, 2001: A Space Odyssey, *Immortal Beloved* and *Fantasia*. **June 2000.** **Tickets:** \$17-\$35. Sun 7:30 pm. Riverbend Music Center, Kellogg Ave. exit off I-275, Anderson Twp. **June 10:** The Bach and Beyond series goes beyond Bach with a program of Haydn and Mozart. Jaime Laredo conducts. Richard Hawley, clarinet. **June 17:** Bach and Beyond is all Bach this week. Jaime Laredo conducts. Michael Chertock, piano. **June 24:** Bach and Beyond features works by Zwilich, Mozart, Rzewski and Arriaga. Jaime Laredo con-

ducts. Ursula Oppens, piano. **Tickets:** \$30. Tues 7:30 pm. Corbett Auditorium, CCM Village, UC Main Campus, Clifton, (513) 381-3300.

PYRAMID HILL SUNDAY PICNIC CONCERTS

June 1: Walnut Hills High School Steel Drum Band. **June 8:** University of Cincinnati Community Band. **June 15:** Pat Murphy. Enjoy acoustic guitar and vocal favorites from James Taylor to Dan Fogelberg. **June 22:** West Chester Symphony. **June 29:** Chazz presents an incredible variety of music from Calypso to Celtic, including bagpipes. **Tickets:** adults \$4, children \$1.50. Sun 4-5:30 pm. Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park and Museum, 1763 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton, (513) 887-9514.

SEVEN HILLS SHOW CHORUS

June 11: Guest night for ladies who love to sing. Wed 7-10 pm. Valley Temple, 145 Springfield Pk., Wyoming, (513) 333-5426.

TAFT MUSEUM OF ART CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

June 1: The last concert in this year's series features cellist Carlos Zavala with the Amerett String Quartet, vocalists Bertha Helmick, and pianist Julia Spangler. Christ Church Cathedral, 318 E. Fourth St., downtown, (513) 241-0343, ext. 15.

opera & dance

CHOREOGRAPHERS WITHOUT COMPANIES

June 6 & 7: Contemporary Dance Theatre's annual showcase of work from dance mavericks. **Tickets:** adults \$18-\$22, seniors & students \$12. Fri

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CINCINNATI OPERA

June 19 & 20: Cincinnati Opera Guild Opening Weekend Dinners. **Tickets:** \$75. Thurs & Sat 5:30 pm. Corbett Tower, Music Hall. **June 19, 21, 27:** Puccini's *Turandot*. **Tickets:** \$14-\$110. Thurs, Fri & Sat 8 pm. **June 26 & 28:** Seven Deadly Sins, presented with *La Voix Humaine* and *Medusa*. Thurs & Sat 8 pm. Music Hall, 1241 Elm St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 241-2742.

theater

THE BIBLE—THE COMPLETE WORD OF GOD (ABRIDGED)

Thru June 14: Falcon Productions presents this abbreviated look at the Good Book, with a very abbreviated cast. **Tickets:** \$10-\$12. Fri & Sat 8 pm. Westwood Town Hall, 3017 Harrison Ave., Westwood, (513) 481-9042.

BRIGADOOON

Thru June 8: The village may show up only once in a hundred years, but the Showboat Majestic presentation will be around for slightly longer. **Tickets:** adults \$15, seniors & seniors \$13. Wed-Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 & 7 pm. Showboat Majestic, Cincinnati Public Landing, downtown, (513) 241-6550.

CORPUS CHRISTI

June 12-28: Know Theatre Tribe presents Terrence McNally's controversial play (for an inter-

view with director Michael Burnham, see Local Talent, page 20). **Tickets:** \$10-\$12. Thurs-Sat 8 pm. Gabriel's Corner, 1425 Sycamore St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 300- KNOW.

THE GINGHAM DOG

Thru June 15: A young interracial couple struggles to save their marriage in this American classic by acclaimed playwright Lanford Wilson. Presented by Cincinnati Shakespeare Festival. **Tickets:** adults \$20, seniors \$18, students \$16. Thurs-Sat 7:30 pm, Sun 2 pm. Cincinnati Shakespeare Festival, 719 Race St., downtown, (513) 381-2273.

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

June 17-29: This musical revue will return you to those heady, hilarious days of high school. Presented by Showboat Majestic. **Tickets:** adults \$15, students & seniors \$13. Wed-Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 & 7 pm. Showboat Majestic, Cincinnati Public Landing, downtown, (513) 241-6550.

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

June 6-8: In a remote public house in Western Ireland, Christy Mahon becomes a local hero when he announces that he has killed his father. *Playboy* is a wild, farcical and poetic play about reputation, the fickle nature of celebrity and lost opportunity. Presented by New Gate Celtic Theatre Company. **Tickets:** adults \$15, seniors & students \$12. Fri 8 pm, Sat & Sun 2 & 7:30 pm. Walton Creek Theatre, 4101 Walton Creek Rd., Mariemont, (513) 533-4822.

ROMEO & JULIET-A

June 20 & 21: An original musical comedy—based

on the familiar Montague/Capulet love story—presented with lots of four-part harmony by The Delta Kings Barberhop Chorus. **Tickets:** \$12. Fri 7:30 pm, Sat 2 & 7:30 pm. Deer Park High School Auditorium, 8351 Plainfield Rd., Deer Park, (513) 851-0984.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE KIDS

SUMMER THEATRE CAMP

June 9-13: Presented by Lebanon Theatre Company. Every student has the opportunity to be a part of the Music Man Junior in July. **Tickets:** \$75. Mon-Thurs 9-11:30 am, Fri 9 am-1 pm. Top of the Shoe, Shoe Factory Antique Mall, Cherry & South Sts., Lebanon, (513) 491-1932.

THE SYRINGA TREE

Thru June 14: Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park presents the winner of the 2001 Obie Award for Best Play Off-Broadway. This deeply evocative tale tells of the love between two families, one black, one white, and the two children that are born into their shared household in early 1960s South Africa. **Tickets:** \$30-\$45. Sun, May 17, 9 pm; Tues-Fri 8 pm; Sat 5 & 9 pm; Sun 7 pm. Shelterhouse Theatre, Playhouse in the Park, 962 Mt. Adams Circle, Mt. Adams, (513) 421-3888.

WHEN YOU WISH UPON A FISH

June 25: Presented by Madcap Puppet Theatre. **Tickets:** \$1.50-\$3. Wed 10:30 am-noon. Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park and Museum, 1763 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton, (513) 887-9514. ☐

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LINDA
VACCARIELLO

Called to Rome

Volunteers make a difference in city schools, because it takes a village to teach world history.

In a reading room at St. Francis Seraph School on Liberty Street in Over-the-Rhine, Damon, Paul, Alicia and Harry are sitting down to a lesson about ancient Rome.

"We just here till 9:30," announces Damon, looking at the wall clock.

"Yeah," says Alicia. "9:30."

"No, 9:50," says Harry.

"You sure?"

Damon, Paul and Alicia (not their real names) are sixth graders who live in the neighborhood. Harry (real name: Harry Santen) is a retired attorney who does not. Santen comes here every week as a volunteer to assist instructor Mary Bertolini in teaching world history and social studies. This week Bertolini has asked him to work with a few students as they explore civilization's progress from the birth of Christ to the Fall of the Roman Empire. This is a long time, hundreds of years, so the extra 20 minutes will be helpful.

By way of review, Santen and his charges look at a map and discuss how the Romans controlled so many countries, which Damon sums up by explaining that "ain't nobody could conquer them." When asked to name some Roman rulers, Damon again volunteers: Julius Caesar, Cleopatra and Ben-Hur. After some thought he drops the marque name of Ben-Hur from the list. He also recalls that Cleopatra was a ruler who had some trouble with her brother, and that she didn't actually live in Rome but lived "on the other side."

"In Egypt?"

"Yeah, Egypt. Yeah."

Damon is the smallest in the group and the most active, swiveling around on his butt as if the chair is waxed. Like Alicia and Paul, he wears the traditional Catholic school outfit of dark slacks and a plain shirt that refuses to stay tucked. He looks as if he could use a couple of minutes in the school playground to run off his extra energy, but that's not going to happen, because St. Francis Seraph School doesn't have a playground. In some ways, that's a blessing. There was a shooting around the corner from the school the day before, an event that has gotten to be business-as-usual in the neighborhood. A playground at the corner of Liberty and Vine would be a world of danger.



PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ



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When St. Francis Seraph School was built in 1906 there were Franciscan friars teaching history, math, science, literature and lots and lots of religion. In 1906 there were also 900 Catholic households in the parish. It was the children of those families who wore down the stair treads, and it was their little hands that polished the banisters to a high gloss. The worn stairs remain, but today only 1 percent of the 140 children who go to school here are Catholic.

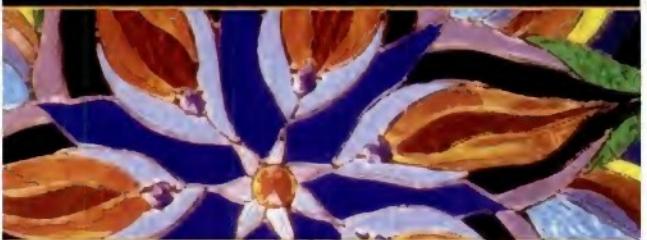
The inspirational screen saver on the computers in the sixth grade classroom isn't a passage from Psalms, it's a quote: *I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. I cannot accept not trying.* It's The Word According to Michael Jordan, a different kind of saint. Today at St. Francis Seraph, students learn church values but not church doctrine, so it's a slightly different Catholic education than students are getting in parishes in east side or west side suburbs.

Still, history is history. Santen steers the talk back to the map in the textbook and, drawing their attention to Byzantium on the Black Sea, encourages a discussion on the advantages of living in a port city. All four take turns reading aloud from the textbook, stopping to name a few Roman gods ("Zeus and some others") and to discuss the persecution of the early Christians. Alicia stumbles over the word *persecution* and looks it up in the book's vocabulary list. *Catacombs* also sets her back, but Santen helps her sound it out. She is shy about pronouncing long words and half-buries her mouth in her palm when she tries, but she writes down each new word's definition in her notebook without prompting.

Santen volunteers here because he feels that history is an important subject and because he feels that sixth grade is an important year. He volunteers because he believes that this school has a vital place in the lives of these children, and that these children have a vital place in, well, humanity. And it should go without saying that he volunteers because he likes it; as a retired lawyer, there are plenty of other ways he could use his non-billable hours.

St. Francis Seraph is one of eight urban elementary schools supported by CISE—the Catholic Inner-City School Education fund. CISE was formed 23 years ago to help buoy up the finances of schools like St. Francis Seraph, schools in shrinking city parishes where most families live at the poverty line, where most children are not Catholic, not white and not able to pay full

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tuition. This year CISE will try to raise something in excess of \$1.7 million from individuals, foundations and corporations. Santen is chairing the annual fund-raising

FORMED 23 YEARS AGO, CISE HELPS SCHOOLS in shrinking city parishes where most families live at the poverty line; where most children are not Catholic, not white and not able to pay full tuition.

campaign, which is why he has to leave after class today to take a meeting in some executive suite somewhere. He's happy to do it, but he'll be glad when the fund-raising is over because then he can get back to his regular three-days-a-week schedule at St. Francis. Sixth graders and their history lessons are far more interesting.

For one thing, he gets to talk about Nero. "When there was a fire in Rome, Nero blamed it on Christians," Santen says to his four charges. "Do you think they did it?"

There is silence from all three, then a realization that the answer might lie in the

books before them. Paul scans a page and sees that Nero is actually *quoted* as saying "the Christians started the fires!" This seems proof enough to him. But Damon,

channeling his restless energy for the good of the cause, reads the entire paragraph about the persecution of Christians, Nero and the burning of Rome, and mulls over the accusation.

"No!" he finally asserts.

"Why not?"

"Cause Christians are kin of Jesus, and he wouldn't start no fire."

There is more to learn as the years A.D. roll on. They read about how Constantine had a dream about carrying a flag with a cross into battle, and about how he woke up and decided he *would* carry a flag with a cross on it into battle. And won! And legal-

ized Christianity! They learn he renamed Byzantium after himself: Constantinople. "Imagine that you conquered Dayton," says Santen. "What would you name it?" Made-up names are tried on for size. Much laughing.

St. Francis Seraph has other volunteers who come in to work individually or in small groups with children who need special help, which is to say most of the children here. Santen has observed what many teachers already know—there's a real need for enrichment programs for the best and the brightest, the kids who don't get as much attention. And what everyone in this school must know is that once anyone volunteers, they're hooked. They can see the job that needs to be done, and every little success feels like a huge triumph.

At 9:50 Santen announces that it's time to close their world history books and return to the regular classroom. Gym is next, then class work, then lunch.

"We got five minutes more," protests Damon.

"No, we don't," says Santen.
Disappointment all around.

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Worldly Wise

Toyota's Dennis Cuneo believes that, to compete globally, you have to work locally.

When Dennis Cuneo was growing up in small-town Ridgway, Pa., in the 1950s, life was straight out of *Leave It to Beaver*. Dads went to work, moms cooked supper. Doors were never locked. Televisions had three channels at the most. Meat and potatoes were served at every meal. Everyone was white. Gay meant happy. The web was something a spider made, not something to be surfed.

Now, as the senior vice president of Erlanger-based Toyota Motor Manufacturing North America, Inc., Cuneo's life is very different. He employs a workforce that is white, black, Asian, Hispanic, Indian, male, female, straight, gay, disabled. He keeps track of world happenings via CNN and communicates with business associates in Japan through e-mail. He has mastered chopsticks and has signed autographs for Japanese school children. And when he makes a decision, it can impact lives around the country and the world.

He is a modern-day business executive. And he relishes it.

"It's been quite a ride," the 53-year-old executive says, sitting in a conference room at Toyota's pristine manufacturing headquarters in Erlanger. Cuneo speaks confidently and authoritatively, though he is in fact a quiet, reflective man—the kind of man to whom others listen. "When I was growing up, the only diversity in my town was the Polish, Italians or Germans. I think we had one Jewish family in town. Everyone drove a GM, Ford or Chrysler. I remember seeing a couple of Volkswagen Beetles and thinking they were quite strange."

His trip from small-town boy to business executive might be a metaphor for the changes that many Cincinnati corporations must make to compete on the global stage. "Change is here. It's going to happen, get over it," says Cuneo. "If Cincinnati can develop a reputation as a place open to new ideas and new philosophies, it helps with growth. The future of this region depends on whether we treat globalization, the environment, diversity and technology as stepping stones or obstacles."

Cuneo, the oldest of five brothers and sisters, fled Ridgway for Gannon College in nearby Erie, Pa. "I wanted to get out of that small town," he says.

There was never a question he would go on to college. "My dad quit after one year of college to be a production worker at the [local printing] plant," Cuneo says. "He never had to say it, but I knew that was one of



PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURIZ

the biggest regrets of his life."

Cuneo went from Gannon—"When I got to Eric, I thought that was a *big town*"—to Kent State, where he earned a master's degree in 1973, then to New Orleans for a law degree. By 1976, he was in Washington, D.C., working for the U.S. Department of Justice's anti-trust division. He loved the job, but that was also the time when he and his wife, Bonnie, had their children, a daughter followed closely by twin boys. "There was one day we were so strapped for cash we couldn't pay the diaper guy," he says. "My wife said, 'You have to get a job and start making some real money.'"

He joined a private firm and started handling anti-trust cases. It was the late 1970s and early '80s, and the Iranian oil crisis had changed America's way of life. Seeing this as an opportunity, Toyota explored moving some operations to North America. The corporation hired Cuneo's firm for anti-trust advice. Eventually, they just hired him.

CUNEAO'S START AT TOYOTA was a classic trial by fire. He stepped in just as the corporation was taking over a former General Motors plant in Fremont, Calif., and the labor negotiations were heated. "There was no way the UAW [United Auto Workers] was going to let us reopen without their people," he says. "This is a plant where there were thousands of grievances. They had problems with communism, drugs, and the absentee rate was 15 to 20 percent. And we were going to teach them the 'Toyota way'?"

"But it worked. We tried to change the culture and motivate them to reach a level of excellence never seen before at that plant and make it one of the most productive plants in North America. And we did that."

Cuneo's own presence helped matters. A slight man, he's a natural consensus builder, relying not on any imposing physical presence but on well-considered

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strategy. In California, he and his team succeeded in winning over a few union leaders and sent them to Japan to learn manufacturing techniques. Once they bought into the system, the rank and file followed. The plant—one of the most demographically diverse in the nation—began to flourish.

That experience has stuck with Cuneo throughout his 19-year career with Toyota. He's learned to communicate with and adapt to people who are very different from himself. "Even in Washington, D.C., 25 years ago, there was only black and white—that was diversity," he says. "This was the first time I worked with Hispanics, Asians and Japanese."

Cuneo credits his father with showing him the path to success.

"My father was always open-minded," he says. "Growing up in my family, you never heard racial slurs. My father would not allow it.... When I joined Toyota, I had to quickly adjust to the Japanese culture. I read several books about the Japanese, and tried to soak up as much as I could. Having gone through that exercise, it was relatively easy for me to adjust to the diverse culture that we faced in the Bay Area."

He spent much of one year in Japan's Toyota City, learning the company's principles and techniques, but also dining on sushi and struggling with chopsticks at business lunches. "We'd go off into the countryside on the weekends, looking for something to do, and people would look at you because you were American. School kids would come up and ask for your autograph."

It dawned on him: It was as if he were Japanese walking through Ridgway. Only Japan was less hostile than home.

"This was a time when union leaders were taking sledgehammers to Japanese cars," he says. "I remember going home to Ridgway for a wedding and a guy I knew got all over me for working for Toyota. 'How could you go to work for the Japanese?' We had a rather heated conversation. At one time, he'd been the local Chrysler dealer. He made a big point about how Lee Iacocca had kept Chrysler afloat, and saved an American company—in the face of 'unfair' foreign competition. My basic response was that the world was changing—and that the reason Toyota and other Japanese and German companies had gained a foothold in the U.S. was because consumers liked our products. Ironically, the company that he touted—Chrysler—is now part of Daimler Chrysler, and is headquartered in Germany."

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"However, his sentiments are still shared by others. I recently heard from one of our dealers that a senior executive of a Cincinnati-based company didn't want to buy our vehicles, because 'he didn't want to send the money to Japan.' I sent him a note, summarizing our economic impact in the U.S.—31,000 direct jobs, 140,000 supplier and dealer jobs, and in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana 13,000 direct jobs, 20,000 supplier and dealer jobs, \$7 billion investment."

But Cuneo doesn't often find himself explaining the global economy. Over the past 20 years, he's seen a big change in attitudes. He notes that Fifth Third Bank recently hired a representative who speaks Japanese to handle the private banking business of Toyota executives. He points to Procter & Gamble executives who train in other countries, Chiquita's international operations, the fact that Federated has department stores in some of the most diverse cities in the nation.

This point was driven home to Cuneo strongly when his own company came under fire in 2001 for running advertisements some African-Americans felt were racist. The ads, which pictured a dark-skinned man's mouth with the gold image of a RAV4 sports utility vehicle imbedded in his tooth, drew the ire of the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

"We seized the opportunity to retool our diversity strategy," Cuneo says. "We committed to spend \$800 million a year with minority businesses, appoint an outside advisory board and improve opportunities for minorities inside our company."

He sees Cincinnati's recent racial troubles as another opportunity. "There isn't as much of a melting pot here as I saw in the Bay Area," he says. There, his children had high school friends who were Japanese-American, Hispanic-American, African-American. "It was no big deal. Here, I was walking through the Florence Mall one day and there was a group of Chinese. I heard one lady say to another, 'They must be from Toyota.' They were Chinese, not Japanese."

Six years ago, when Toyota prepared to move him here, Cuneo had reservations. He'd heard Cincinnati was a conservative town. But he's come a long way from Ridgeway; he's had to. "I've grown to really like this place," he says. "I like it a lot. There's a real sense of pride in this area. A sense of ownership I didn't feel in the Bay Area. This is a place where we can overcome these problems. I've seen it work in the Bay Area, and it will work here."

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The Donor Dance

Getting patrons to part with their money requires some fancy footwork.

Gregory Smith, president of the Art Academy of Cincinnati, is a master of the dance. He knows all the moves and can lead a partner artfully through the steps with the finesse of Fred Astaire. Of course, we are not talking about his ability to mambo, fox trot or tango. As the leader of an institution knee deep in a capital campaign, we're referring to Smith's ability to engage contributors in that most delicate of exchanges, the donor dance, in which he asks for money and partners write big checks. At stake is the Academy's future home on East 12th Street in Over-the-Rhine. For the past two years, Smith has spent 75 percent of his time dancing.

Smith tosses a map of Over-the-Rhine onto a long wooden worktable in his office and points to two buildings outlined in red. He soberly explains that if plans proceed on schedule the Academy will move in just before classes begin in the fall of 2005. And for plans to proceed on schedule, Smith and AAC's trustees must acquire \$8.5 million toward the \$10.5 million project.

As capital campaigns go, the AAC began in the enviable position of already having nearly 20 percent of its total goal before the first donor was

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approached. When the Academy separated from the Cincinnati Art Museum in 1998, it walked away with a share of the assets: its part of the endowment, some of the funds from CAM's capital campaign in the 1990s and the title to its building on St.

RAISING BIG MONEY IS A FORMIDABLE challenge in the best of times, but convincing people of means to part with their precious assets during a recession is a daunting task.

Gregory Street in Mt. Adams. Still, finding an additional \$8.5 million was uncharted territory for this relatively small institution.

Raising big money is a formidable challenge in the best of times, but convincing people of means to part with their precious assets during a recession is a daunting task. The AAC's timing couldn't have been worse. The solicitation of large donations began in March 2001. So did the recession.

Also, three other major visual arts institutions had capital campaigns in full swing.

The Cincinnati Art Museum, Taft Museum of Art and Contemporary Arts Center were ready to leap into their futures with massive renovations and expansions, and all needed millions to make that leap. All three have pulled it off. And Smith is confident

gins with two feasibility studies: one to determine what the goal should be; the other to determine the organization's or institution's ability to raise the amount needed.

For the AAC, that meant first checking out the two buildings at 12th and Jackson streets. "We looked at everything from structural concerns to environmental issues and came up with a conceptual scheme for a base conversion," Smith says. Once the cost was determined, it was time to start fund-raising.

"You always start with the people closest to the institution," Colebrook says, referring to the board of trustees. The more individuals know about an organization from serving on committees, the more involved they are in shaping the institution. It's important to identify a number of prospects for the top 10 gifts. Soliciting such individuals is called the quiet or leadership phase of a campaign, when major donations are secured to ensure the goal is attainable. "The [trustees] will be the drivers of the campaign if they are convinced that the goal is in line with the mission of institution." Example: Back in 1993, four

the AAC will join them in the winners' circle within the next two years.

The art of asking is, indeed, an art. Long before checks are written and resources committed, hours of strategy go into determining the who, how and how much of soliciting. At this early stage, someone like Cynthia Colebrook, a fund-raising consultant and veteran of several local major campaigns, is often brought onboard to assist organizations in taking those first steps. Quite often the process be-

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years prior to completion of the Playhouse in the Park's \$7.5 million renovation, Otto M. Budig Jr. was convinced that building a women's restroom with 19 stalls was, indeed, right in line with the Playhouse's mission of presenting plays for entertainment. Why? Because more than doubling the number of stalls directly affected patrons' ability to get back to their seats on time after intermission. The Otto M. Budig Foundation picked up the tab for the additional johns.

Quite often, this quiet phase—when mum is the word on who has given what—can get complicated, Smith says. "Typically people want to know what others are doing before they commit." He calls it "a chicken and egg problem" with capital campaigns and very much a fact of human nature, but a big problem for the institution when people hold out. On the flip side, Smith says, the process occasionally works better than anticipated when patrons are aware of others' gifts and it becomes a game of one-upmanship. "Occasionally donors want to remain anonymous," Colebrook says. Some just don't want to be bothered with other requests, but occasionally it's a case of genuine humility. "That's getting rarer and rarer because most people want the name recognition," Colebrook says.

Reciprocity is another factor that comes into play among large donors locally. "If I tell you that I'll give to your campaign this year if you promise to contribute to mine next year, it's a major motivation for giving," Colebrook says.

Capitalizing on people's motivations for giving is always key, especially when the campaign moves beyond the trustees' circle. "Each donor has his own agenda," Colebrook says. "The better understanding you have of their reasons for giving, the more targeted you can make the solicitation message." The AAC started out with two basic messages back in March of 2001. They gained a third after the civil unrest of April 11, 2001.

"When we began, the whole project was based on the Art Academy's internal issues," Smith says, referring to the school's need for more space and consolidation of its Eden Park and Mt. Adams buildings and continuing relationship with the Cincinnati Art Museum. "We talked to people about what the project could do for the Art Academy and the museum," Smith says. The patron pool quickly expanded to in-

clude more corporate support when it became clear that moving the Academy to the heart of OTR would place an organization with a \$5 million operating budget in the heart of the city's most depressed neighborhood. Companies that weren't that familiar with the school understood the economic implications and pledged support. Which points to another tenet of capital campaigns: ask a lot of donors to dance.

"Part of the challenge of fund-raising is to get people beyond their perception that a few wealthy families will always be there to give whatever is necessary," Colebrook says. That might seem like a huge problem in this town when it comes to raising money for any arts-related cause. Certain wealthy families nearly always have their names attached to large donations. Still, people here from all levels of income give generously—proof of that can be found in the final tally of the recent Fine Arts Fund drive, which raised a record \$10 million. A quarter of a million dollars was given to the Art Academy.

Still, Smith knows that you can't make assumptions about sources of funding. The leadership phase, which typically raises 50 percent of the goal, was supposed to end more than year ago for the AAC. At the end of April, more than a year overdue, Smith calculated the school would still need another month or two before going public with the final push toward the \$8.5 million goal. "Requests that we had counted on early on didn't materialize because of the downturn in the stock market and commitments people had made to other campaigns," Smith says. "It's just taking longer to get there, but it will happen." Luckily, history is on his side. Dollars given philanthropically throughout the country have risen every year since totals have been tracked, according to Colebrook. "This has happened despite recessions, wars or any other economic factors."

Of course Smith would love it if funding AAC's new home had been as easy as raising money for its current location in Eden Park. That building was constructed in the late 1880s. Back then there was no capital campaign, no strategic planning, no fancy footwork. A committee of two in the form of arts supporters Reuben Springer and David Sinton sat down one afternoon. One pledged, "I'll give \$50,000 to build the school if you do."

"Sure," said the other. Done deal. ☐

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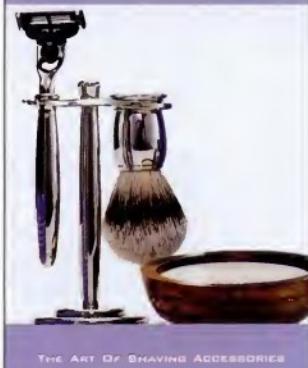
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Church festivals are as essential to a Cincinnati summer as Graeter's peach ice cream and Reds baseball. All over the region, from one weekend to the next, miniature villages sprout in church parking lots and school cafeterias as easily as crabgrass grows in our lawns.

While they may be entertainment to most of us, the festivals are strictly business to the churches; thanks to thousands of volunteers, the proceeds are an annual boost to the churches' bottom lines. You don't have to be a believer to partake. Anyone can join the fun. And you can go to as many festivals as you like, knowing the dollars you leave behind will

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN KURTZ

come back to the community in outreach programs, ministry, education and more.

While the games of chance, carnival rides and new car raffles appeal to many, we confess that the festivals are our excuse for eating our way through the season. We like brats and metts washed down with a cold beer and followed by funnel cakes and Sno-Kones. We also love dolmades and anticuchos, spanakopita and kibbee, produced by our own summer league of nations. Cincinnati's summer festivals serve up food, family, cultural traditions, along with bingo and dunking booths. Turn the page for your invitation to this year's schedule. >>

BY MARY STAGAMAN

Cincinnati





MY BIG FAT GREEK FESTIVAL

On a hot June weekend, a cold beer isn't nearly as refreshing as a tall cup of iced tea scented with mint. Heat rises from the asphalt in great waves, but nothing stops the Big Fat Greek Festival called

PANEGYRI. The biggest church-sponsored event in the region will draw throngs of revelers over three days this month, as Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church celebrates the fest's 30th birthday. Before it's over, hundreds of chickens, thousands of pounds of lamb, beef and pork, and countless pieces of baklava will be cooked and consumed by the hungry crowds.

Though the church's members include families of Arabic, Ethiopian, Eritrian and Slavic background, during Panegyri everyone is Greek for a day. The names of the desserts are a mini-tutorial in the Greek language: galatobouriko, pasta flora,

melomakarouna, koulourakia, saragli. Whether you pronounce them correctly or not, the handmade delicacies are a highlight of the weekend, and the best disappear early.

Not to worry, though, because the rest of the menu keeps coming until sunset on Sunday. Start with a mezzethakia, an array of tidbits including dolmades (stuffed grape leaves), kalamata olives, and saganaki (fried kasseri cheese sprinkled with lemon juice that prompts spontaneous shouts of "Opa!"). Continue with a slice of Greek pizza, its chewy dough topped with tomatoes, feta and spinach. There's more spinach in fragrant spanakopita, papery layers of phyllo dough filled with greens, feta and fresh dill.

Pita bread can hardly contain peppery slices of gyro meat, made from seasoned lamb and beef and topped with onions, >>

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RENTALS





HOME COOKING Souvlaki on the grill; volunteers man the kitchen and feed hundreds of hungry festival-goers; pastry diva Mary Tzahonis offers up sweet treats to go.

tomatoes and tzatziki, a creamy sauce made with yogurt, cucumbers and garlic, which is a cool counterpoint to the hot meat. If that's not enough, there are skewers full of souvlaki, grilled cubes of marinated pork, and complete dinners featuring roast chicken, the layered eggplant dish called moussaka, and baked macaroni and beef known as pastichio.

Take a break from the table with a tour through the Greek boutique and

grocery, or spend a quiet moment in the church sanctuary, with its stunning altarpiece. Afterwards, stop at the kafenion (coffeehouse) for a concert by Greek-Canadian guitarist Pavlo. Back outside, watch dancers of all ages perform Greek folk dances to the infectious sound of the bouzouki, a sort of mandolin. And if the spirit moves you, shake off the heat, pick up your feet and dance the rest of the night away. • Mary Stagaman



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13-15

St. Vivian / Finneytown • St. Michael / Sharonville • Holy Family / Price Hill • St. Aloysius Gonzaga / Bridgetown • St. Margaret of Cortona / Madisonville • St. Gabriel / Glendale • Guardian Angels / Mt. Washington
June 14: Shandon Old-Fashioned Strawberry Festival / Shandon • St. Catherine of Siena / Ft. Thomas • St. Joseph / Camp Springs

20-22

St. John the Baptist / Harrison • St. Columban / Loveland • Corpus Christi / Springfield Twp. • St. Antoninus / Covedale • St. James of the Valley / Wyoming
June 21 & 22: Gier's Goettafest / Mainstrasse Village, Covington

Into the Fryer

At St. Joseph Festival in Crescent Springs, fried chicken is an institution. Sure, many parishes have a particular favorite, a trademark specialty they've perfected over the years. But this fried chicken is different. It's Noll's Famous Fried Chicken (don't forget the *famous*), and it garners a level of respect unmatched by the juiciest brats or the sweetest corn on the cob. Maybe it's the recipe—this chicken is pretty amazing—or maybe it's the family, the four generations of Nolls who have dedicated half a century of summers to their parish.

In 1955, Robert B. Noll Sr. volunteered to fry chicken at St. Joseph Festival. Did he know he'd spend every succeeding August trapped in a hot, cramped booth frying thousands of chicken pieces? Probably not, but he never quit, even after suffering a stroke in 1991. Instead, he embraced his role as chicken guru, lending his family name to the booth and ceremoniously passing the recipe along to his descendants. In a remarkable act of gratitude, the parish dedicated the Robert B. Noll Sr. Church Hall after he died in 1999.

More than any engraved plaque, the three generations of Nolls frying chicken outside St. Joseph Church represent Robert B.'s legacy. His son Tom, the new patriarch, mans the fryers and directs the volunteers. His grandson David is at Tom's side, always ready with an extra pair of hands. Great-grandson Brian handles the grunt work, running back and forth between the cafeteria line and the cooking tent outside. A sign propped against a pole advertises the Noll Family Fryers, but they need no introduction. Friends and neighbors stop by to say hello before heading indoors for dinner.

Those who pause long enough to watch Tom cook an entire batch are sometimes surprised by his technique. Following his father's lead, he pre-fries the chicken early in the day to save time and packs it in foil-lined metal cans to maintain its moisture. When Tom and David first unload the chicken hours later, the soggy legs and thighs look rather anemic, but after a quick dip in hot oil, they emerge crispy and caramel-colored. It's not the prettiest process, but it produces delicious chicken, and fast. The ingredients aren't too fancy either. Just flour, salt and pepper. It's a simple formula, but the scores of finger-licking fans inside would say that it's the simplicity—and the fond memories of Robert B.—that make it so good. • Hannah Agran

ST. JOSEPH
FESTIVAL

August 8–10

2470 Lorraine Ct.,
Crescent Springs, Ky.

FABULOUS FOOD
fried chicken



27–29

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart / Reading - St. Vincent Ferrer / Kenwood - St. Veronica / Mt. Carmel - Panegyri Greek Festival, Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church / Finneytown



Tom Noll lifts a batch of his family's famous fried chicken from the hot oil at St. Joseph's Festival.

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

Let's suppose 1,500 of your dearest friends are coming for dinner. But don't worry, you'll have plenty of volunteers to help with the cooking. They'll start months ahead and be ready for the big day when it comes in August. For parishioners at St. Anthony of Padua Maronite Church, a dinner like this isn't imaginary; this meal is sponsored by their church, which invites friends from all over to its annual **LEBANESE FESTIVAL**.

Lebanese tradition dictates that even unexpected visitors be fed well. So on this Sunday morning, the kitchen buzzes with preparation. Earlier, members of the parish gathered as they

do each year to ready a buffet of traditional Lebanese foods.

There's kibbee, the national dish of Lebanon, which is nothing more than ground beef and lamb mixed with bulgur (cracked wheat)

and molded into a football shape. A blend of warm spices elevates it to iconic status. Kibbee is served uncooked like a Lebanese steak tartare—or fried until it's a rich mahogany color—and served with spring onions and pita bread. The job of cooking the kibbee belongs to the men of the parish, while the women execute the delicate blend of meat and spice for the raw version.

St. Anthony's version of hummus b'tahini, or chick-pea dip, is light and creamy, unlike the >>

LEBANESE FESTIVAL August 3

St. Anthony
of Padua Maronite
Church,
2524 Victory Pkwy.,
East Walnut Hills



DINNER PARTY One of the many favorites on the menu is dolmades (stuffed grape leaves); hungry guests wait for their meals.



High on These Hogs

While his West Chester neighbors sleep, Hank Korb preps his pigs. The only way he can cook, shred and serve fresh pulled-pork sandwiches at St. John Festival is to start before dawn. He lights the coals at 5 a.m., and as festival booths come to life around him, he stands guard over his charges. Though he meticulously records their progress in a dog-eared notepad, Hank admits that the hogs, sealed inside recycled oil drums, pretty much cook themselves. The real work—and the real fun—begins later, when a crew of family and friends assembles in the church kitchen for a hectic evening of nonstop pork pulling.

Hank first learned the art of pig roasting from his brother, who owns a hog farm in Butler County and has pulled pork at Korb family reunions for some 30 years. A few years ago, armed with the converted steel barrel his brother commissioned from a Talawanda shop class, Hank introduced the family favorite at St. John, one of Cincinnati's largest church festivals. The sandwiches, stuffed with moist meat and doused with parishoner Carol Wenstrup's homemade barbecue sauce, have become so popular that Hank has enlisted an army of assistants to help keep up with demand.

As soon as he hoists the blackened pigs from the drums, the race against the hungry visitors begins. Hank, his daughter Julie, and pals Don Stouffer and Larry Unger stand around a shallow rubber tub and expertly section the meat, removing the charred skin and separating the bones. Elbow deep in grease, they chatter loudly and pinch stray scraps of meat between conversations. "The best part is being together," Don says. "It's like one big family."

In the bustling kitchen, the assembly line is in full swing. Runners from the booth outside load trays with crusty Kaiser rolls and heat them in the oven. Others fill and refill bottles with spicy sauce. After roughly pulling the pork apart, Hank's core team moves to the wooden counter and painstakingly shreds each piece of meat. Their methods differ—Hank uses knives, Don forks, and Julie her hands—but the result is the same. They fill tray after tray with evenly torn meat, dampen it with flavorful fat drained from the roaster and send it out to the booth. At 5:45, they break for beer. Barely pausing to wipe their hands, they touch plastic cups over the heap of shredded pork and say "Cheers!" Within seconds, they're back to work, pulling apart meat as fast as the crowds outside can eat it. • Hannah Agran

ST. JOHN THE
EVANGELIST
FESTIVAL
August 1–3

9080 Cincinnati–
Dayton Rd.,
West Chester

FABULOUS FOOD
pulled-pork
sandwich



Hank Korb gets ready to start pulling pork, as a parishoner douses a sandwich with homemade sauce.



PICKY EATERS Even though kids can't pronounce what they're eating, they'll still clean their plates; individual servings of homemade tabbouleh stand ready for the hungry crowds.

heavy renditions from the supermarket. The kitchen is scented by great bunches of mint, gathered from parishioners' gardens, which are being minced by hand with huge quantities of parsley to form the foundation of tabbouleh. Diced fresh tomatoes, bulgur, onions and a light dressing of olive oil and lemon juice finish the dish.

These three dishes alone would make a meal, but there's also mihsni malfuf, or cabbage rolls, which were made months ago and baked for serving today. Likewise mishshi warq' inab, grape leaves stuffed with rice, meat and spices, and rolled tightly into little cigars. Lamb

turns up again, blended with tomatoes and green beans, in lubyi bil-lahm, a stew as comforting as a big bowl of chili. Tender pastry makes a pocket for seasoned chopped spinach in a portable pie that's sweetly savory. The recipes are old, but the food is fresh and delicious.

The first diners arrive about noon after Mass in the church, and the feasting continues into the evening. At tables all around the room, three or four generations of a single family gather to celebrate their heritage and share it with others as an ageless sign of generosity and hospitality. • Mary Stagaman

JUL.

4-7

Gather your friends and host a food fest in your own backyard to celebrate the Fourth of July

FOR COMPLETE CHURCH AND OTHER FESTIVAL DETAILS, GO TO
www.cincinnatimagazine.com

11-13

St. Lawrence / Price Hill • St. Rita School for the Deaf • Evendale • St. Martin of Tours / Cheviot • St. Joseph / North Bend • St. Pius X / Edgewood, Ky. • St. Thomas More / Withamsville • Gold Star Chilifest / Sawyer Point, downtown • Bastille Day / Montgomery

18-20

St. Bernard Church of Taylor Creek / Taylor Creek • St. Bernard • Cheviot • St. Cecilia / Oakley • Moeller High School / Montgomery • Immaculate Heart of Mary / Anderson Twp. • St. Simon the Apostle / Delhi

July 17 & 18 St. Benedict / Covington
July 18 & 19 St. Paul / Florence

Meet the Chickendales

You know those men who just love to grill? As summer nears, they long for the hiss of grease hitting hot coals. At family barbecues, they wield kitchen tongs in one hand and cold beer in the other. They wear their aprons proudly. They swear by their methods, and though they'll politely sample the competition, they harbor a not-so-secret belief that they alone have perfected the art of outdoor cooking.

Meet the Chickendales, the men behind St. Catharine's rotisserie chicken. They've got the tongs, the beers and the aprons. And they operate the largest spit roaster around. Like any self-respecting grill-masters, they don't have much tolerance for skeptics. When I commend their golden brown, crispy-on-the-outside-juicy-on-the-inside delicacy, they counter, "You think we'd serve bad chicken?"

No, I don't. But these guys feed the hungry crowds at St. Catharine Festival. Accomplishing such a feat without sacrificing quality requires carefully engineered mass production. Enter Greg Ellerhorst, the Henry Ford of chicken production. He modeled his contraption after the devices at the Germania Society's Oktoberfest. A tangle of cogs and bicycle chains controls eight long spits, each loaded with 11 trussed chickens. They spin in splendid synchronization over the evenly raked coals, a mouth-watering ballet of plump thighs and knobby drumsticks.

Greg permits only the finest birds to grace this stage, however. He orders his chickens through Luken's Poultry, Fish and Seafood in Findlay Market. They're shipped fresh from Tennessee and weigh only three pounds, so the meat is flavorful and tender. A generous coating of seasoning mix enhances, rather than smothers, the chicken's natural taste. That cold beer doesn't hurt matters either.

Until last year, only the lucky parishioners at St. Catharine knew about the rotisserie because Greg was so loyal to his own church. Meanwhile, at St. Martin of Tours in Cheviot, festival coordinators settled for a catered chicken dinner. Greg heard of their dilemma and generously volunteered his services. At the St. Martin debut, curious visitors braved the smoke to gawk at the enormous rotisserie before heading indoors to pile plates with homemade hash browns, green beans and chicken. One family even took a picture. Maybe the Chickendales should sell tickets. They sure put on a great show. • Hannah Agran

ST. MARTIN OF
TOURS FESTIVAL
July 11-13

3720 St. Martin's Pl.,
Cheviot

FABULOUS FOOD
rotisserie
chicken



25-27

Holy Trinity / Norwood - Our
Lady of Lourdes / Westwood

July 25 & 26 St. Ann / Hamilton

July 26 & 27

St. James the Greater / White Oak



Greg Ellerhorst's giant rotisserie spins away as another Chickendale carries a tray of meat to the kitchen.



MI CASA ES SU CASA

The knife cuts swiftly through the peel on a potato, sending it in a graceful arabesque to the waiting bucket. The nude potato is dropped in a second pail full of lemon-scented water and the potatoes that are already done. At this steady pace, 40 pounds of potatoes will be swimming in no time.

Across the room, four women lean earnestly over a table, performing some surgery of their own on a herd's worth of beef hearts. Later they'll toss the trimmed meat

in vinegar, season it with garlic, pepper, cumin and salt, then let the whole rest overnight. In church kitchens all

over town, a similar scene plays out on this Friday evening in September. Tomorrow all will converge in the parking lot at St. Charles Borromeo in Carthage, home of the Catholic Hispanic ministry known as Su Casa.

Recent immigrants know Su Casa is many things: social outreach, hospital accompaniment, health awareness, translation assistance, English classes and job fairs, not to mention regular Masses, weddings and baptisms.

But on this glorious late summer weekend, Su Casa becomes the **HISPANIC FESTIVAL**, a celebration of Spanish-speaking people the world over. Geographic boundaries dissolve in the whirl of embroidered muslin skirts worn by the dancers of Que Lindos es Pan- >>

SHELL GAME You can try 40 dishes from 11 different Hispanic countries, but don't worry — tacos are still on the menu.



How to Eat Fried Pickles

In a world where replacing pineapple upside-down cake with cherry pie might alienate a whole generation of nostalgic parishioners, it takes a daredevil to risk messing with tradition. But what if you could get cherries for free? If the pie flops, OK, festival food never makes much money anyway. If the pie succeeds, the profit margin will be huge. It's not so much a matter of culinary innovation as shrewd business. Just ask Tim Crooker, festival coordinator at St. James the Greater in White Oak. He thought fried pickles would be a disaster. Now they're as customary as, well, pineapple upside-down cake.

Tim never planned on frying pickles at St. James. He just wanted to fry *something*, preferably a savory something, in his spare funnel cake fryer. For a while, his food committee considered mimicking Outback Steak House's popular Bloomin' Onion. If it sells at a steak house, the volunteers figured, it might work for us too. And then they heard about the free pickles, donated by a well-connected parishioner. The financial opportunity was too big to ignore. They ditched their onion enterprise and turned to pickles.

Despite their relative obscurity in Cincinnati, fried pickles are ubiquitous in the South, so the concept wasn't entirely unprecedented. Even so, it was a radical move for the young festival. Tim was sure the scheme would fail, but at the unveiling, adventurous festival-goers plowed through gallons of pickle slices. Now they're the St. James specialty.

Some fans eat them straight, tempering the intensely salty flavor with creamy orange dipping sauce. Others layer the pickles on hamburgers from the "St. James Grille." On the afternoon I visited the booth, one woman confessed to having downed three helpings that day. Her friend, spooning glistening cherries over a golden funnel cake, laughed. "It's okay," she said. "It's a vegetable."

Matt and Lisa Midei have headed the pickle production since the beginning. It's a labor-intensive process. First they whip up the sauce, the only surviving relic from the Bloomin' Onion days. Then, during the festival, they pat dry handfuls of pickle slices, coat them with onion ring batter mix and dunk them in bubbling oil. It's hot, repetitive work, but the spirited Mideis cheerfully laugh off their complaints. The biggest hazard of frying pickles? The smell, Matt says. It permeates everything. • Hannah Agran

ST. JAMES THE
GREATER FESTIVAL

July 25-27

3565 Hubble Rd.,
White Oak

FABULOUS FOOD
fried pickles



Coated in batter and hot out of the fryer, these pickles are a savory surprise alone or on top of your burger.

ama. Cultures blend as kids of many colors gyrate to a different beat under a tiny canopy that outlines a dance floor on the asphalt. Latin pride swells when the queen of the festival is announced on Sunday afternoon. And, best of all, there are nearly 40 dishes from 11 different countries to sample for as long as they last.

Those potatoes are combined with onions and eggs in the delectable open-face omelette the Spanish call tortilla. Threaded on skewers and grilled over a hot fire, the beef heart becomes the Peruvian street-food anticuchos; also from Peru is fresh fish and shrimp "cooked" in lemon juice to make a refreshing ceviche. Rice, black beans, smoked ham, greens and oranges are layered into the Brazilian triumph, feijoada completa.

The simple combination of bread, roasted pork and cheese becomes, once toasted, a hearty sanduche Cubano. There are tacos and burritos and enchiladas too, but Mexico is also represented with elotes, fresh corn-on-the-cob with lime, sour cream and ground chili pepper. Fried plantains, served with Venezuelan pulled beef, are good enough for dessert, but there's salpicón (fresh fruit salad from Colombia) and arroz con leche (Spanish rice pudding), too. An altogether perfect close to summer in Cincinnati. • Mary Stagaman

MARKET PLACE

Tired of eating?
Take home a
reminder of your
festival fun — a
souvenir from one
of the many
vendors; mini-
muchachos mug
for the corner.



AUG

1–3

St. Teresa of Avila / Price Hill • St. John the Evangelist / West Chester • St. Therese / Mt. Airy • St. Aloysius on the Ohio / Sayler Park • St. Bart's / Springfield Twp.

Aug 1 & 2 St. Julie Billiart / Hamilton
Aug 3 St. Anthony of Padua / Walnut Hills

8–10

Our Lady of Visitation / Mack • Sacred Heart Church / Fairfield • St. Margaret of York / Loveland • St. Joseph / Crescent Springs • Taste of Colerain / Colerain Twp.
Aug 10 St. Aloysius / Shandon

15–17

Newport Barbecue Festival, Riverboat Row, Newport • St. William / Price Hill • St. John the Baptist / Bevis • St. Bernadette / Amelia • St. Elizabeth Ann Seton / Milford

22–24

St. Mary / Hyde Park • Taste of Blue Ash / Blue Ash • St. Ignatius Loyola / Monfort Heights • St. Mary / Hyde Park
Aug 22 & 23 Germania Society Oktoberfest / Colerain Twp.

Soup of the Day

In the quiet hours before the dinner-time rush at St. Rita Festival, Mike Woebkenberg pauses to watch me sample his mock turtle soup. He skillfully ladles it from a steaming 25-gallon pot to a Styrofoam cup. He's obviously done this a few times before, so he's used to apprehensive virgin soup-eaters. His smiling face echoes the grinning turtle on his airbrushed T-shirt as he says, "If you don't like it, you're not offending us. That's fine."

Truth be told, I wasn't the biggest fan of the beefy, tomato-based soup with the lemony punch, but plenty of people are. In 1966, Mike recalls, his family sold 50 gallons. Last year, they made 600 gallons. Between devotees who buy the stuff by the gallon and first-timers who dubiously ask if there's *really* turtle in there, the booth has no shortage of customers.

Part of the soup's appeal is its homegrown heritage. The Woebkenberg family has been brewing the St. Rita specialty for some 80 years. Mike's grandmother Clara was a member of the original mock turtle triumvirate with fellow Altar Society members Adele Becker and Ann Listerman, and the secret recipe has stayed in her family's hands. Mike and his uncle, Ben Koenig, coordinate the soup production these days, but Mike has plans to bring his teenage son on board this year.

Two weeks before the festival, in St. Rita's gleaming cafeteria kitchen, a cheerful crowd gathers to prepare the first vat of soup. Wiping his face, Mike contemplates the upcoming week. Twenty-three more batches. He looks a bit dazed, despite the row of women feverishly peeling eggs and washing lemons at the sink. Outside, a gang of towheaded future mock turtle aficionados takes refuge in the refrigerated truck. Mike has said that he never really contemplated *not* making mock turtle soup, and it seems these kids would agree. As babies, they watched their parents cook from the confines of a makeshift playpen. This year, between breaks in the truck, they haul empty milk jugs and mayonnaise jars into the kitchen. Like princes and princesses resigned to membership in a royal family, they've never really considered an alternative summer pastime. When asked whether they enjoy making soup, the children look puzzled. They shrug and chorus, "It's just what we do." • Hannah Agran

ST. RITA FEST
July 11-13

1720 Glendale-
Milford Rd.,
Evendale

FABULOUS FOOD
mock turtle
soup



Mike Woebkenberg and his soup-making crew churn out gallons of the beefy, tomato-based soup with a lemony punch called mock turtle. It's a Cincinnati classic.

29-31

Nativity / Pleasant Ridge - St.
John Neumann / Pleasant Run

Aug 30-Sept 1

St. Margaret Mary / North
College Hill

AT THE FREESTORE'S FOOD SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM, POTS



SOUL

SIMMER, KNIVES FLASH AND MIRACLES HAPPEN EVERY DAY.



KITCHEN



Menu of *the Day*

TUNA NOODLE CASSEROLE,
SPANISH GREEN BEANS,
BEEF SOUP, COLE SLAW, PASTA SALAD

It is 8:45 Monday morning in the kitchen of what used to be Queen City Vocational School on Ezzard Charles Drive, a 1970s-era hulk of brick and concrete as gray as the sky outside. But inside, bad weather has not dampened Chef Fernando Scarbriel's enthusiasm for life in general and for today's menu in particular. Scarbriel has a tumble of salt-and-pepper hair corralled by a cap and a manner that is expansive. The recipes he has just distributed are similarly larger than life, and men and women dart around him weighed down with ingredients—a bushel of beans, an armload of cabbages, tuna cans the size of bongo drums.

"We're going to need 30 meals for Our Daily Bread and 65 for Neighborhood Investment Partners," Scarbriel says, reviewing his notes. "And peanut butter

cookies," he says. "We're going to send them peanut butter cookies!"

At a stainless steel prep table, the first of the day's many onions are being chopped by John Autenrieb and Will Smith. Will is 27, a big, broad-shouldered man who looks like he played football in high school, which he did. John is the only white student in the class; he's closer to middle age and his breadth is closer to his belt. About half of the students in the kitchen are what Scarbriel calls "grads"—students who are midway through the 10-week course at Cincinnati Cooks, the FreeStore/FoodBank's food service training program. The rest are undergrads like John and Will, just one week into their training and participating in their first complete meal.

John had been following a pleasant and efficient woman named Carla Mooney until he was given the onion assignment, which he began by painstakingly peeling off the onion skin a shred at a time. Carla's a grad, she moves fast, and she's responsible for two things today: the tuna noodle dish and John. She sets down an armload of pasta, takes up a knife and an onion, and shows him how to make short work of it.

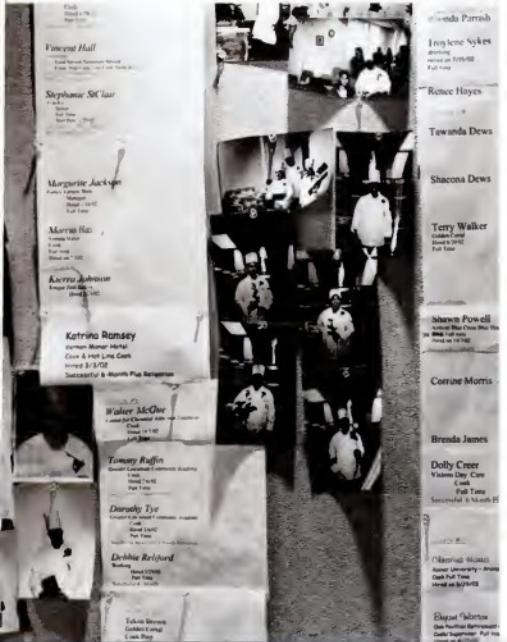
TEXT BY LINDA VACCARIELLO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN KURTZ



SUPPER TIME

Meals made at Cincinnati Cooks find their way to homeless shelters and after-school programs. Program manager Dennis Caskie (far left, center) and Will Smith, a student, work together at a sink in the teaching kitchen. Shawn Powell (top left), an alumnus of the program, carves a cucumber garnish to top a cold salad. Well-ordered raffling pins await the next assignment. Fernanda Scarbriel (left) checks the progress of a king-sized peach cobbler.



FINAL TOUCHES

A bulletin board (*above*) tracks the career progress of some of the program's alums. Six weeks into the program, Alisha Brown (*top right*) supervises two new students on a baking assignment. Kimberly Williams (*right and far right*), the program's recruiter, pins a carnation on Will's jacket, then snaps a picture of the graduating class: (from left) Carolyn Baker, John Autenrieb, Will Smith, Alisha Brown, Jordan Kelly, Eloise Jones and Janet Mabrey.





Will is silent, head down, eyes watering slightly, chopping an onion with the slow intensity of a brain surgeon. Paul Smith, the grad he's paired with, pauses and quietly adjusts Will's grip on the knife. "Your hand won't get as tired that way," he says.

Cincinnati Cooks is a free program for low-income adults. There are students here who have never been wage-earners, and others who have had prior careers, military service, lots of experience. Some are unemployed and some aren't. Some have children and some don't, some have police records, drug history or health issues and some don't. Mostly, people start out strangers, and by the time 10 weeks are over they know one another very well. They may not know *those* things about one another, but they know how to work like a team and that's what counts.

At the end of 10 weeks, if John and Will and their classmates stick with it, they'll all go through a graduation ceremony. They'll get to wear crisp white chef's jackets, and they'll be presented with sets of knives and certificates that show they've learned basic culinary skills, CPR, sanitary practices. The other thing that will happen at graduation is that people in the audience will cry. Not just their families and friends—who are entitled to get all weepy at this sort of thing—but perfect strangers.

It happens every time, and it's hard to explain why. Maybe it's because what comes out of the kitchen here is so much more than the sum of its ingredients.

BY 10:10 A.M., Carla has flaked 15 pounds of canned tuna, cooked nine pounds of noodles and transformed a glistening yellow blob of Minor's chicken base into a gallon of stock. April Dobbs, a tall, handsome woman who is shift leader today, has checked on the progress of the soup, slaw and pasta salad, and located the undergrad ("Whose product is this?") who momentarily left the green beans unattended in the steam kettle. Scarbriel has made a circuit of the whole kitchen dozens of times, has tasted the slaw dressing ("Needs sugar!"), supervised the making of cookies ("Just three steps!"), and repeated his cheerful mantra ("Clean as you go! Clean as you go!"). By now the undergrads are catching on: keep busy. At 10:35, undergrad Eloise Jones rushes to grate the last carrot for the slaw; the tattoos that ring her neck peek out above her shirt as she scrapes. 10:40: Tuna and noodles arrive at the steam table. 11:05: Pasta salad gets a tomato rose garnish.

11:10: "Aprons off," Scarbriel calls out. Lunch is ready.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 90

PAUL BROWN'S FAMILY DOESN'T KNOW WHO MURDERED HIM OR WHY.

BUT TO STOP SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS WOULD MEAN TO GIVE UP ON PAUL. AND THAT THEY WILL NOT DO.

Leanne Bowling sits on her parents' living room sofa in Hamilton, trying yet again to describe to yet another stranger what her brother Paul Brown was really like. Finding the right words, after all, might convince someone to come forward, speak out, unravel the mystery.

"Everyone who knew Paul liked him," Leanne begins. At 33, Paul still had a devilish, almost childlike quality, with a slightly sheepish grin, large brown eyes, parted but still messy dark brown hair. An avid sports fan and music lover, Paul was a top student at Miami University, earning a degree in public administration in 1991 and later pursuing a year's graduate study at Ohio State.

Perhaps his killing was a crime of opportunity, committed by someone who watched as Paul withdrew cash from a Main Street ATM at about 10:30 p.m. on March 23, 2002. Perhaps not. Four days later, he was found face-down in Two-Mile Creek on Hamilton's west side, dead from multiple stab wounds.

Two-Mile Creek is tricky to reach, Leanne points out, so she figures that whoever dumped Paul's body is probably local. And Paul had such a distinctive appearance—tall, almost gangly, often wearing his

SNAPSHOT

beloved green, black and white vintage Boston Celtics jacket. Somebody must have seen something. That's why the Browns are still working to increase the reward money. "Sad to say, a person who might not talk for \$1,000," says Leanne, "may decide to for \$10,000 or more."

A few weeks after Paul died, his family appeared on WKRC's Crimestoppers. Host Deborah Dixon said to Leanne that if Paul were her relative, she'd be passing out flyers. "We thought, 'We're allowed to do that?'" Leanne exclaims, wide-eyed. Paul's brother, Matt, created a flyer, and days later they had recruited friends, family, coworkers and a few volunteers to distribute some 13,000 copies. They manned a booth at the Butler County Fair last July and held a concert at the Hamiltonian Hotel in October to raise money for the \$10,000 reward. Planted at one corner of Richard and Nedda Brown's front lot is a plaque dedicated to their son's memory. There's also a huge billboard, lighted at night, pleading for anyone who knows anything to come forward.

Richard says, "You can drive yourself crazy with the if-onlys." If only Paul's car hadn't conked out and Paul hadn't asked Matt to drop him at Buffalo Wild Wings that night. If only he'd gone straight home.

But in the end it all boils down to one thing: If only Paul hadn't run into the wrong person. So the Brown family continues to search. Giving up is not an option.

BY COLEEN ARMSTRONG

CRIMESTOPPERS

REWARD \$10000



FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING
THE MURDER OF PAUL BROWN
LEADING TO AN ARREST
LAST SEEN ALIVE ON
3/3/02 AT B&B'S AND THE JER



CALL

(513) 352-3040
or

1888-352-3040

PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ

WHEN POETS

A PHOTO SAYS IT ALL. A handful of good-looking young men and their good-looking, well-dressed young wives pose in front of a Mt. Airy picnic table piled to overflowing with martini shakers and half-empty bottles of gin and vermouth. Their eyes are lit with intelligence and excitement, and everyone is smiling. There's a campfire in the background, and darkness is about to fall.

The shoes, the clothes and the Mamie Eisenhower-style hairdos all suggest another time, and indeed it was: May 22, 1953, a postwar evening filled with food, drink and literary repartee in the company of English poet Sir Stephen Spender. It was a day out of an era unknown to most Cincinnatians, a period that might be called Cincinnati's Golden Age of Poetry.

It began in 1951, when the University of Cincinnati launched the Elliston Poet-in-Residence Program. For more than a decade, the Elliston program flourished, each year bringing a notable English or American poet to spend the entire spring semester in Cincinnati. Embraced by some of the city's most prominent families, the poets not only gave campus readings and lectures, they also immersed themselves in a social life reminiscent of Tolstoy's Moscow.

Of course, the Elliston program isn't dead; the university still brings in an Elliston poet each year for a month-long residency. But 50 years ago, it was something else. It was a time filled with intellectual debate, late-night skinny-dipping and anecdotes good enough to land in literary biographies. Robert Lowell, John Berryman, Robert Frost and many others left their mark on Cincinnati. And Cincinnati, it seems, left its mark on the literary lions as well.

The story begins, not with the Elliston lectures themselves, but with their namesake, a woman named George Elliston. Born in 1883, Elliston grew up in Mt. Sterling, Ky., and graduated from Covington High School, sticking with the masculine name her parents gave her. She joined the staff of the *Cincinnati Times-Star* in an era when women reporters were confined to weddings and society events, but it wasn't long before Elliston was climbing out of second-story windows with stolen photos and covering the denizens of the red light district. She got stories no one else could, such as an interview with Anna Marie Hahn, the first woman to die in Cincinnati's electric chair. She beat out her male competition for the plum assignments: the coronation of George V, the Paris Exposition and the eruption of a new volcano in Mexico.

And in 1909, after all that, she assumed the powerful post of Society Editor.

George Elliston was more than a successful newspaperwoman: she was a poet. Newspapers and magazines syndicated her poems, and they were reproduced in British and American anthologies, translated into

WERE HIP

A HALF-CENTURY AGO, A VISIT BY A WORLD-CLASS
POET WAS CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION.

ANYONE FOR A MARTINI?



By Dale Brown

Illustrations By Edwin Fotheringham

foreign languages and set to music by various composers. Four hardbound volumes of her verse still grace the shelves of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.

A slender woman with luminous dark eyes and wisps of nondescript hair slipping from her signature cloche, Elliston lived like a pauper. She had an \$18-a-month cold-water flat on a shabby block of West Fourth Street, and the staff at one restaurant called her the "gelatin lady" because she never ordered anything else. Her friends took pity on her Salvation Army dress and gave her clothes.

Though reluctant to spend money on ordinary things, the lively Miss Elliston loved parties and frequently gave them, both in Cincinnati and in Morrow, where she bought a 100-year-old log cabin with a large barn where she staged amateur theatricals. There was even a hint of scandal about the doings there: unsupervised male callers.

Elliston did marry, but her husband lived in St. Louis, and though she moved there after her marriage, she soon returned to Cincinnati, quietly resuming her newspaper job. She and her husband never divorced and remained on cordial terms.

What most people didn't know about "poor George" was that she was saving her meager \$100-a-week salary and discreetly investing in property under her married name. When she died in 1948 in Madisonville, Cincinnati was stunned to learn that she'd left the astonishing sum of \$250,000 to the University of Cincinnati. The gift was to be used to establish a chair "to promote the cause of poetry."

At the time Elliston's will was read, poet Robert Frost happened to be lecturing at the university. "Where is there such another chair in the United States?" he said. And he was right. Elliston's gift was a rarity, enabling the university to create a program that became the envy of the literary world.

The task of managing the Elliston bequest fell to the English Department head, the correct and proper William S. Clark II, a scholarly man sometimes described as a "gentle dictator." Clark took his job very seriously. "His mission, as he conceived it—he was a very New Englandish sort of person—was to bring culture to the Midwest," says Keith Stewart, a retired English professor. "He and his wife Gladys held the responsibility very close to their chests. No one knew the name of the Elliston

DURING POET JOHN BERRYMAN'S VISIT, THOSE WHO ENTERTAINED THE POETS TOOK UP DANCING IN PEOPLE'S HOMES.

SOME ALSO STARTED SKINNY-DIPPING,
DITCHING THEIR BATHING SUITS AT THE WALNUT HILLS

SWIMMING POOL OF
IPHIGENE BETTMAN.



poet until he announced it." The Clarks not only hand-picked the poets, they'd also travel to Europe to vet them if need be. Then they'd negotiate the contracts, choose the lodgings and arrange the schedules.

As Clark conceived the program, the poet would spend a full semester in Cincinnati, usually arriving in January or February. For \$3,000 a month (a princely sum in 1951), the poet would do six or eight programs and conduct a workshop or two. Both the lectures and the workshops would be open to the community, giving the university an opportunity to win influential friends.

The poet would also, Clark decided, be entertained.

ONE OF CLARK'S FRIENDS was 33-year-old Elizabeth Bettman, then the wife of future judge Gilbert Bettman. A dark-haired beauty from an Eastern blue-blood family, Liz Bettman spoke French and was an accomplished hostess. Brilliant and quick, she knew her literature and later became a professor at UC's University College. She was vivacious and (by Cincinnati standards) radical in her political and social views, getting herself arrested for taking black children into Coney Island when it was still segregated.

Though they were an unlikely pair, Clark and Bettman developed an elaborate plan (with the university defraying some of the costs) to roll out the red carpet for visiting poets by enlisting the hospitality of people on and off campus. They tapped 20 or so wealthy and prominent arts supporters, people with celebrated names like Wulsin, Fleischmann, Strauss, Emery and Lanier. From the university there were another 10 or 12 couples, including five who formed an inner circle. In addition to the Clarks and the Bettmans, that circle included philosophy professor Van Meter Ames and his wife, Betty; English professor George H. Ford and his wife, Pat, and classics professor J. Alister Cameron and his wife—a couple known affectionately as Hamish and Puggy. Pat Ford is the only member of the group still alive.

Despite the best laid plans, the beginning of the series was not auspicious. The first poet, set to arrive in February of 1951, was to be none other than the acclaimed T.S. Eliot. But at the last minute Eliot cancelled, and Clark had to scramble for a replacement. On such short notice he was forced to settle for a poet of lesser distinction, Robert P. Tristram Coffin.

The first lecture was held in Wilson Memorial Hall, and about 400 people, many times today's crowds, braved a snowstorm to attend. Apparently Coffin, a kindly man from Maine, was well-liked, and he enjoyed himself so much he volunteered to paint a scene of a Southern landscape in the university's Stephen Foster Room. But his readings ran on and on. At one event, Mrs. Claude Lotspeiche, a founder of The Seven Hills School, reportedly interrupted: "And that would be a

good one to end on, Mr. Coffin." Coffin realized he'd met his match and sat down.

The following year was a different scene altogether. Clark invited John Berryman, who later won a Pulitzer Prize for *The Dream Songs*. And that, it seems, is when things really got rolling.

Berryman was a pixie-like figure with a slight body, long hands and a quizzical face. He was warm and outgoing, but also so loud and manic that Ford described the season as "Berrymania." Instead of the expected six appearances, Berryman insisted on giving 17, energetically reading and lecturing with his sleeves rolled up, flashing a pair of fashionable braces. And he was such a heavy drinker that he set a tone for the poetry season for years to come. From then on, there were martinis. Lots of martinis.

It was also during Berryman's visit that members of the group took up dancing in people's homes (Berryman's wife loved to dance) and partying until 5 a.m. Some members also started skinny-dipping, ditching their bathing suits at the Walnut Hills swimming pool of Iphigenie Bettman, Gilbert Bettman's mother and a prominent local newspaper columnist.

No one interviewed for this story could be persuaded to describe the pool parties (although Pat Ford says they were innocent enough), but Ames, a published poet himself, recorded many of the group's activities in a meticulous journal he kept. An entry from 1952 hints at the fun:

"Cincinnati, Sunday 30 March 1952. How full of living, seeing our friends over and over, the days have been! A week ago last Saturday, with the Berrymans at the Fords'. Sunday my philosophy of religion students over in the afternoon. Then dinner with Billy & Elsa Strauss, the Berrymans, Levines, et al, being there, and the Camerons... Berryman came over Tuesday evening after his wife had gone to bed. We laughed and laughed and he got drunk. It was in my study, where I had gone to bed to read.... Yesterday Hamish and Puggy drove the Berrymans and us to see the Carl Strauss house.... Then to the Ransohoff house to see Toscanini, the 9th Symphony, his last television appearance, but it had been cancelled... then dinner at the Camerons' on the pheasants Gil Bettman had shot, and he and Liz were there with Danny and the Berrymans, and there was broccoli with a fine sauce, and Eileen seemed embarrassed at John's loudness..."

The days that followed were a smorgasbord of debates on Plato and Sophocles, intimate Sunday dinner parties with mint juleps in Clifton homes, elegant soirees in Indian Hill and occasional light-hearted readings of verse written by Berryman in honor of his Cincinnati friends. There was also the occasional altercation. For example, Berryman and Ames' wife had some sort of an argument at a dinner party when Berryman was "taking himself so seriously." However, Betty Ames finally got the upper hand. "With him," • *CONTINUED ON PAGE 94*

thinking



inside

the box



NICHOLAS MUNI AND CINCINNATI OPERA REFUSE TO
BE CORNERED BY TRADITION.

BY KATHLEEN DOANE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN KURTZ

TRIPLE THREAT

Nicholas Muni at Music Hall. Muni's productions of *La Voix Humaine*, *The Seven Deadly Sins* and *Medusa* will take audiences on an emotional roller-coaster ride.

Opposite: Dany Lyne's early designs for *Voix*, top, and *Sins*.



Nicholas Muni has a reputation for being intense. Cincinnati Opera's artistic director even describes

himself that way. And it's clear that when the man speaks, he is very serious and very focused. "I'm not a tantrum guy, but I'm tenacious," he says. Then there's his wardrobe to reinforce the sober impression: black shirts, black cords, black sweaters, black beret, black, black, black.

So his relaxed demeanor is a bit surprising one afternoon in late March when he previews the upcoming season's second production, a triple bill of one-act operas that could well be his directorial triumph to date. In the small conference room near his office, Muni leans over the black box set model, carefully positioning a cutout figure as he begins to talk about his conception of the operas. He calmly tosses around phrases like "emotional thriller" and "Hitchcockian mystery." It is only after a few minutes that his arms—no longer able to restrain the excitement that his voice has controlled—begin to rotate like the blades of a wind turbine. The man has every right to be exuberant.

Catherine Malfitano, the Nicole Kidman of the opera world, will take on all three leading roles in Muni's productions of Francis Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine*, Kurt Weill's *The Seven Deadly Sins* and the world stage premiere of William Bolcom's *Medusa*. The first two are operas Malfitano has wanted to sing for years, the third a work she will bring to the opera stage for the first time.

The entire season—which runs June 19–July 19—is being billed as an homage to opera's greatest singing actresses. In addition to Malfitano, Lauren Flanigan, who sang the role of Abigaille in *Nabucco* here two years ago, returns to sing her debut Norma, and Eva Urbanova will sing the title role in *Turandot*. So why would singers of such stature—who normally sign on for three weeks of performances at the Metropolitan Opera or San Francisco Opera—come to Cincinnati

for two performances? Nicholas Muni is the short answer, according to Flanigan. His star is rising and he's taking Cincinnati Opera along for the ride.

As he begins his seventh season, it is clear that 51-year-old Nicholas Gasparo Muni and Cincinnati Opera are a marriage made in, well... Valhalla. And that has stunned the rest of the opera world, which stood on the sidelines back in 1996 and asked, "What are those people in Cincinnati thinking?" Muni was as unlikely a choice as the board could have made to lead what many considered the most conservative company in the country. His reputation for off-the-wall productions often left audiences shaking their heads, especially when he messed with beloved standards. Of course, what the rest of world didn't know was that the CO's board, in hiring Muni, had given local opera lovers exactly what they had been asking for: a new direction for the country's second oldest opera company.

ACT I

PROBE MUNI ON HIS APPROACH to opera and you quickly prick the passion underlying his intensity. "When I see [opera] treated in merely a decorative way, that upsets me," he says, throwing out his left arm to punctuate the thought. Muni is sitting behind a desk that occupies half of his tight quarters in the midsection of Music Hall's south wing. He's also multitasking. "Let me finish this e-mail," he says, rapid-clicking a response to a colleague. With an emphatic punch to the send key, he wheels around.

"I constantly ask myself, 'What are we doing here at Cincinnati Opera? What are we about?' If we don't ask those questions, [opera] just becomes a leisure activity." Of course, a lot of opera lovers might ask, and the problem with that is?

JENUSA / 1998



/ Muni's minimalist conception placed the singers onstage with few props. /

SALOME / 2000



/ Muni's twists included Victorian costumes, a raked (tilted) stage and a change of locale for the characters. /

The problem for Muni is that he believes all art, especially opera, has a higher calling than mere entertainment. "Why am I going to invest my own resources and other people's money if it isn't going to mean something and stimulate something?" And that's one thing patrons exposed to Muni's productions generally agree on: they stimulate *something*, often lots of debate.

Take the case of his *Salome* during the 2000 season, which set the Biblical tale in Victorian times. Most of the action took place in a fanciful observatory around a huge telescope and tilted gear mechanism. Some costumes were Victorian, others looked more Scheherazade. And there were more relationship twists in Muni's version than a daytime soap: to Salome's lust for John the Baptist and Herod's lust for Salome, Muni added Herodias's kinky fascination with Salome, her own daughter. After the last veil fell, soprano Stephanie Friede spent the final 10 minutes traversing the stage au natural. When all was said and sung, it was familiar themes that Muni hoped audiences would find relevant: physical and emotional enslavement and a poster family of dysfunction. Some got it; others deemed it just plain weird.

"Nic always thinks about the storyline in a deeper way," says John Conklin, assistant artistic director of Glimmerglass Opera and one of opera's foremost set designers. Conklin makes this pronouncement shortly after sitting down in the coffee shop of the Mayflower Hotel in Manhattan in early December. He is due at New York City Opera in an hour but eagerly accepted the invitation to talk about his longtime friend and collaborator. "We did a *Traviata* in Tulsa, and that is my perfect Nic story," he says with obvious glee. "It created a huge controversy."

Indeed, the production eventually was picked up by NYCO and, when mentioned today, usually has the adjective *infamous* preceding it. What Muni and Conklin did was dispense with the traditional lavish sets and pack Violetta, Al-

fredo, Giorgio and company into a sparsely furnished box. Muni also fast-forwarded the action to the present day. Reactions were polarized: audiences loved it or hated it. "Instead of saying, 'These stupid provincial people who hate it don't know what they're talking about,' Nic held public forums after every performance to find out why people were so upset," Conklin says. It turns out many felt it wasn't romantic anymore simply because of the set design.

Muni's and Conklin's *Il Trovatore* for Seattle Opera in 1989 sparked similar controversy, dispensing with what Conklin termed a silly storyline and exploring the character relationships from a Freudian perspective. "We told it like a dream, and it made sense at that level," Conklin contends. Radical or not, that production has staying power. This month San Francisco Opera is doing the Muni/Conklin *Il Trovatore*, and Houston Grand Opera plans to produce it in a couple of years.

"Opera can be powerful in disturbing ways," Conklin says. "Disturbing because it isn't always reassuring, and it brings up questions. You don't always get answers, and people like answers." Muni delights in *not* knowing those answers and challenging others to take that ride with him.

"When Nic does something that is not strictly narrative, he's setting up a puzzle for the audience to figure out," Conklin says. Those who saw Muni's *Turn of the Screw* here in 1999 and were left wondering what was real and what was not might encounter that same dilemma in his production this year of Francis Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine*. The story originally was set in a 1950s bedroom in Paris. In Muni's version the action has been transferred to a landscape familiar to everyone: an expressway, late at night, in a rainstorm.

"So much of opera is done by people like the Met who present it as this luxurious commodity, ravishing to look at and technically spectacular, but it has nothing to do with the opera," Conklin says • CONTINUED ON PAGE 229

opera à la Muni

ELEKTRA / 2002



/ Bad blood among family members was emphasized with lights and downspouts that ran red when another victim was dispatched. /

NABUCCO / 2001



/ The back wall of the inner sanctum of King Solomon's Temple was created by "floating" The Ten Commandments in Hebrew. /

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM'S NEW CINCINNATI
WING SHOWS OFF OUR RICH ARTISTIC HERITAGE.
MARK FOX, COMMISSIONED TO MAKE NEW
WORKS FOR THE WING'S FINAL GALLERY,
IMAGINES THE MUSEUM'S DESTRUCTION.

A museum is basically a place to put things. Often those things are beautiful; often they are rare. But always the things in a museum carry a multitude of meanings. A thing collected is no longer just a thing.

For artist Mark Fox, the things in the Cincinnati Art Museum are intensely personal. Fox grew up in Cincinnati (he's an Elder High graduate), and as a child of 7 or 8 his parents drove him up to Eden Park and walked him through the high, cool galleries of the museum. The Duvenecks and the Farnys struck him visually, but young Mark was also fascinated by the tales told within the paintings, and by the stories about the artists themselves.

"The museum wasn't just a place with pictures on the wall," he says, "but pictures wrapped with these other stories."

Thirty years later, Fox is one of the city's most inventive artists. Still it is somewhat surprising—and very exciting—that the museum's director, Timothy Rub, asked Fox to create new works for the Cincinnati Wing's debut. Surprising because Fox's work—intricate drawings of everyday objects, dreamlike videos—contrasts sharply with the Cincinnati classics in the new wing. Exciting because in his new work, Fox plays with the notion of the museum itself. Through a series of videos shot from dollhouse-size models of the galleries, he makes a new place to put things, at once haunted and beautiful, where the human act of collecting never insures permanence.

Fox took *Cincinnati Magazine* photographer Ryan Kurtz on a tour of this imaginary yet familiar museum. —KITTY MORGAN



Thomas Eakins (1844–1916)
Archbishop William Henry Elder, 1903
Oil on canvas
Museum purchase

“This miniature appears in my fake video tour [created for the museum]. I’m an Elder grad, and a lot of my work centers on my feelings around Catholicism. Here’s this stately, gorgeous figure, and yet recent history has shown the Church’s flaws. There’s also a story attached to this painting. [The painter] Eakins was an atheist, and he won an award for this painting but he melted it down. It might be true. It doesn’t matter. But it’s a story I’ve always attached to the painting. An irony.”



The Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Gallery

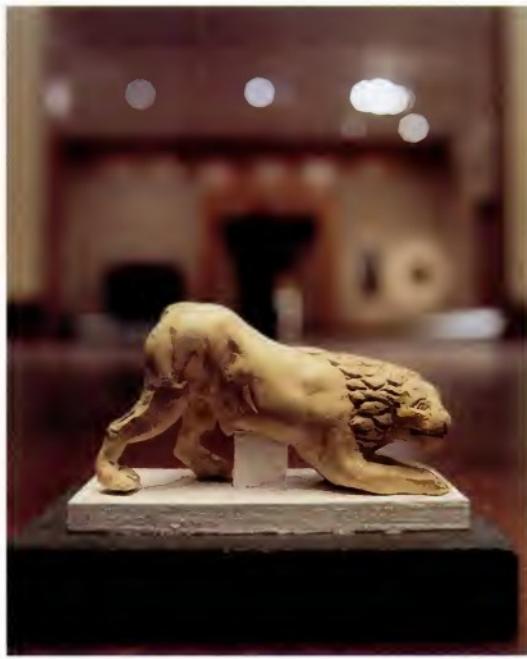
Fox stands in front of a video projection of the gallery—actually, his tiny model of it. He built a birdhouse in the form of the gallery—once used as a studio by Frank Duveneck and Clement J. Barnhorn—and lined it with miniature copies of its modern paintings. Fox hopes that birds will make the tiny gallery their home. A video camera captures the interior scene and sends a live feed back into the museum, projected on a wall in the Cincinnati Wing.

“One of the themes of my work is the idea of collection. There’s humor in the fact that my collection, or any collection, isn’t considered art until it’s in an art museum.”



Hiram Powers (1805–1873)
Eve Disconsolate, designed 1859–61, carved 1873–74
Marble
Gift of Nicholas Longworth

“When I first started this commission, the museum was touting as its icon the image of Eve overlooking Eden Park from the new wing. I put this [miniature] in one of the videos in which a tornado is threatening the museum right outside this window. Art compromised by the power of destruction.”



Lion funerary monument
Greece (Attica), circa 350 B.C.
Pentelic marble
John J. Emery Fund

This sculpture, while not included in the Cincinnati Wing, does appear (as this miniature) in a video Fox created that gives visitors an imaginary tour of the museum.

“Growing up I was fascinated by the spookiness that the museum had. In some ways, the place is still spooky to me. There were these pictures on the wall, but they were wrapped up with stories. I got fascinated by the blurring of fiction and reality.”



Great Hall and Staircase, Cincinnati Art Museum

In this video projection, Fox conjures a flood rising in the museum's Great Hall. "I wanted to tap into a current community vibe about permanence. After the destruction of the towers on 9/11 and the destruction of the Buddha sculptures by the Taliban [in Afghanistan], I've been considering how our identity can be tied up in physical objects, and how strong that identity can be. That people would think that they could wipe out Buddhism by wiping out statues of Buddha is a weird idea but also a powerful one.

"But we can lose our identity in another sense than physical—through laziness. Looking at art takes work on the viewer's part. If you're a passive viewer, if you assume that the art will always be there, that's a kind of destruction, too. We think the museum is so permanent. But is it?"

SOUL KITCHEN

continued from page 73

Dennis Coskie, program manager of Cincinnati Cooks, was hired to develop the program two years ago. He explains the way it works like this: "Rescued" food products that stores and vendors don't need are donated to the FreeStore/FoodBank; the men and women at Cincinnati Cooks use the donated food to learn how to cook; the meals that they prepare are taken to homeless shelters and after-school programs for low-income kids. By the time these undergrads finish they will have used up a lot of food that otherwise would have been wasted. And they will have fed hungry people 8,000 times. "It's a win-win-win situation," Coskie says.

It is a small staff with everyone pitching in to help out, and one of Coskie's non-desk tasks is to stock the staples that fill the walk-in fridge and dry storage. Twice a week he goes to the FoodBank's facility on Tennessee Avenue before dawn to pick up bricks of butter, sacks of flour, eggs, fruits and vegetables, canned goods. From time to time a produce distributor will donate something exotic, and Coskie will return to Scarbriel with a crate of white asparagus or shiitake mushrooms or mangos, and a couple of hours later there's a four-star dish prepared by people who have only just recently learned how to make gravy.

If the program had started a half-dozen years ago, back when the economy was roaring and jobs were going begging, restaurant chains would probably be throwing money at Coskie to support Cincinnati Cooks and snatching his students up as soon as they learned how to grill a burger. As it is, Coskie is worried about financing the program in the future (start-up funds came from the Rosenthal Foundation and support has come from Sara Lee and others). And jobs for his students—that's a challenge.

Many of them live in the center of the city, where restaurants have been devastated by the post-riot, post-9/11, post-everything slowdown. Many don't have transportation, so a restaurant job in the suburbs beyond the bus line is impossible. Some can't get hired at schools or nursing homes because they have felony convictions. And the pay? One morning Coskie got a call from a restaurant looking to hire a display chef. A display chef works on a buffet line making fancy omelettes, that sort of thing. A nice opportunity, but it only paid \$7.50 an hour. He walked out to the

kitchen and watched his grads working on lunch and shook his head. Who could live on that? he thought. Who could raise a family on that?

Coskie is trained in social work as well as culinary arts, and he knows the obstacles his students face. He knows, for example, that one of his current undergrads is, for all intents and purposes, homeless. He knows an alumnus of the program has quit his first position after a month because it took a three-hour round-trip bus commute to get to a job that paid only slightly better than minimum wage. He also knows that every success is huge. There's the single mother from the battered woman's shelter who was hired to cook at the very shelter that saved her life. There's the restaurant manager who was willing to hire a substance abuser in recovery. There's the young man who has just been promoted to sous chef at a terrific restaurant. These things may seem small for a vocational program, but to Coskie they are daily miracles.

Menu of the Day

LASAGNA, MEATBALLS AND SPAGHETTI SAUCE,
PIZZA, SALAD, FRENCH BREAD,
SHRIMP COCKTAIL, CRAB DIP,
CANAPÉS, TIRAMISU AND CRÈME ANGLAISE

Big day, lots of food: After-school meals for the Kids Café; entrees to freeze for homeless shelters; party food for an event at the FreeStore. And the kitchen is full. Undergrads (more confident now), grads (nearly finished with training), a couple of volunteers from the Culinary Arts Academy, plus Al Hargrove, an intern with the Public Allies program, and a couple of Cincinnati Cooks alumni. Lots of people, a swirl of worker bees in a stainless steel hive, voices singing out "Chef, what about . . ." and "Chef Fernando, do you want us to . . . ?"

Scarbriel trained in culinary arts at Cincinnati State. He really likes music, which accounts for the CD player in the kitchen and the tunes he uses to speed preparations up or calm students down. He grew up in the Virgin Islands, which explains his melodious accent, and he served as a chef in the U.S. Army, which may explain his astonishing ability to instantly size up a person or a situation and come up with a battle plan. When he's working he

can be sober-faced, intense and kinetic, but when he does stop and smile his whole face lights up and he is instantly relaxed. His students love him and respect him. They do not fear him, and he has never needed to control his kitchen with a reign of terror. Once he had to dismiss two students for fighting just days before graduation. Fighting is a huge no-no at Cincinnati Cooks—students know that. Still, the purpose of having the rule is to teach people to work together. So Scarbriel brought the two back and told them they could graduate if they cooked a meal together, just the two of them. "They did well," he says with a broad, satisfied grin.

Each day his goal is to have the meal finished by 11 a.m., and by the time the students are ready to eat—hot food in the steam bins, cold salads in the crushed ice—he likes to see the kitchen pretty near clean. Today Kenny Poole, a perpetually cheerful grad, is hosing down dishes and putting them through the washer whenever he has a free moment, and undergrad Alisha Brown, who is waiting for an immense stainless steel bowl of boiled crab legs to cool, gathers up pots and pans for him.

When she started at Cincinnati Cooks Alisha was quiet and hung back a bit; she's still quiet, but now she's past her new-student nervousness. She's not the fastest in the kitchen, but she's thorough and conscientious, and often she's the one who sees that every last crumb is swept up. Alisha's one of several students who works while attending Cincinnati Cooks. She got here at 8 this morning, and at 3, when class is over, she'll catch a ride to Popeye's Chicken to work a shift. Then she'll go home to Avondale to take care of her family—five children and a grandchild. Alisha is 34. She doesn't talk about herself much or about what brought her here, only that there was a time when she felt so defeated she wanted to pack up her kids, catch a Greyhound and leave town, just go anywhere else to find a new life. Now as she moves through the kitchen, she knows she wants to make this her future.

What students learn here is production cooking—volume, volume, volume. Many of them will get jobs assisting in the kitchens of nursing homes or school cafeterias. For that, they don't really need to be able to translate *mis en place*, the French phrase that captures the essence of the well-organized kitchen. They probably could get hired without naming the parts of a knife or



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demonstrating the fine art of conflict resolution. They probably don't *have* to learn those things, but those things are part of what they learn at Cincinnati Cooks anyhow. And perhaps because of that, somewhere along the way students begin to see themselves as something more than utility workers, and they stop thinking about just getting a job and start thinking about having a career.

Back at the crab bucket, several students are cracking the legs and picking out the meat to use in the dip. It is slow going, messy and inefficient, and pretty quickly their training takes over. "Is there a *technique* for this?" a grad wonders out loud. The rest agree that there must be a better way. They have, after all, learned that there's a proper way to do everything, have spent weeks learning standard kitchen procedures; surely there's one that applies to crab legs.

"Chef," someone calls out, "what's the right way to do this?"

"Meat, no shell," he calls back.

He's baffled when they laugh.

Menu of the Day



CHICKEN BREAST
STARCH
VEGETABLE
SALAD

Here's an odd thing about cooking: Sometimes it's harder to fix a meal for one person than spaghetti for 200. That was why Scarbriel played a Yanni CD this morning—to keep people calm. The assignment was to make a meal for one. There were rules: Use a boneless chicken breast and fix it any way but fried. Use a recipe if you want, but don't bring it into the kitchen with you. Prepare each dish, "plate" it and have it ready at 11:30. And share the kitchen with 18 other people doing the same thing at the same time.

Nerve-racking, yes. When afternoon arrives, Kimberly Williams, the program's career coach, has wisely scheduled a workshop on conflict resolution.

It is Williams who recruits each class of students (they're called rotations; these undergrads are Rotation No. 16), and it is Williams who helps prepare them for the highs and lows of the world of work. When they call back after graduation to tell the good news about getting a great job or to

complain about a tyrannical boss, she's at the other end of the phone with congratulations, encouragement, suggestions, support. She shares with Coskri and Scarbriel an enviable ability to absorb an amazing knowledge of her students simply by being around them as they work. She knows they're all adults; she also knows they are very different adults.

Before long the discussion drifts from resolving conflicts on the job to, well, quitting. It's a frequent topic, and an important one. Williams has, on one hand, some students whose self-confidence isn't high, and so she knows some of them are liable to stick with a dead-end job because they're afraid to leave. On the other hand, she has people whose work experience is a long list of three- and four-month stints abandoned when the first frustration appears. So when the subject of quitting comes up, she shows them how to navigate between the two extremes.

"You have to give the job time, and give yourself time on the job," she says. "Then, if you decide that it's going to defeat your long-term goals, you stay until it looks OK on your resume, then start looking for something. But don't *quit* until you have something."

"But there are some things that you just can't take!" The dissenting voice in the back of the classroom is Shawn Powell. Shawn is an alumnus of the program, and he frequently helps Scarbriel work with students. Today he has assisted and made a meal for a guest—lime-marinated chicken breast with petite potato patties in a black bean sauce. It was good. *Really* good. "Good enough to make me leave my wife," according to Scarbriel.

Shawn worked in culinary arts for years until he was knocked down by kidney failure in 1996. Since then he has had a kidney transplant, and he went through Cincinnati Cooks last year to freshen his skills. But he's still on medical disability, and it's easy to imagine that there aren't many employers who'd be willing to provide health insurance for a chef who has had a kidney transplant. So he helps out here. He moves through the kitchen like a dancer, and simply watching him dice green peppers or whisk together a vinaigrette is as good as an evening at the symphony. He is terrifically talented, and every student in the room looks up to him and wants to be that good. And now he is offering a list of situations under which he would quit.

Under the circumstances, any disagreement from Williams would probably be interpreted as disrespect, and she wouldn't disrespect Shawn for the world. And so she listens. "Of course," she nods when he's finished. "You have to know what *your* needs are, and what your *family's* needs are."

You can practically see every student make a mental note: Don't quit until you have another job.

Menu of the Day

FRIED CHICKEN, BAKED CHICKEN, BARBECUE, BEANS, TOSSED SALAD, POTATO SALAD, CABBAGE AND GREENS, COBBLER, CORNBREAD, LEMONADE

John is steering a tiny woman in a huge rasta hat gently through the kitchen door. She's a new student, and when she finished her assignment this morning she simply went into the adjoining classroom and sat down. John saw her, gently walked her back to the kitchen and cheerfully pointed to places where she could help out. Alisha is rolling out cobbler dough assisted by two new students—very funny guys—who are singing along with the CD that's playing—*I want to be your shining star*. Will Smith is using a long wooden paddle to stir sausage into a fragrant, steaming kettle of greens, and he is smiling.

Like John, Alisha, Carolyn, Eloise, Janet and Jason, Will is halfway through the program—a grad now. Today he's paired with a new undergrad named Cliff, who has taken to calling him "Chef Will." Teasing, of course, but it pleases Will. Maybe because he's big and quiet, some people think he's intimidating. And maybe because he grew up in foster homes, sometimes he has a hard time getting close to people. So now to be helping another person learn, to be getting teased and respected at the same time, that's cool. He wants to be like Chef Fernando, who likes to help people, who never seems to get frustrated, who trusts that people will do their best.

Will puts Cliff in charge of the greens while he looks over a job application and waits for his mock interview with Coskie. The grads are going into his office one by one, and returning to the kitchen a little while later looking wrung out. Not because Coskie is hard on them, but because there's

so much to remember—eye contact, a firm handshake, the confident phrases they've practiced. All that, plus he quizzes them about cooking.

Eloise comes out of her session shaking her head. Roux. How much fat to how much flour? She knows those proportions like she knows her own name. But the minute he asked her just now, she went blank.

An hour later, lunch is served. The undergrads, their palates not yet adjusted to the "assessment" end of cooking, are calling for the hot sauce. The grads taste each dish first. And Coskie, Scarbriel and Williams are, as always, generous with their compliments.

Suddenly Eloise sits up with a start. "Chef Dennis!" she blurts out, raising an index finger in the *Eureka!* pose. "Chef Dennis, it's 50-50. Flour to fat. By weight."

Conversation stops and everyone inclining Coskie stares at her, puzzled.

"The *roux*," she says triumphantly, and turns back to her plate.

Menu of the Day

RIBS, WINGS, MAC AND CHEESE, GREENS, SWEET POTATOES, POTATO SALAD, SPAGHETTI, SPAGHETTI SQUASH, SALMON, CHEESE BALLS, CAKE, COOKIES, PUNCH, ICE SCULPTURE

"John, you the *man*!"

"Chef Will, you look like a *real* chef now."

"Jordan, honey, you got *all* these mamas taking care of you."

It is 11:45, graduation is at noon, and everything is ready. In the classroom where guests are gathering—families, friends, caseworkers, FreeStore donors and other dignitaries—Alisha's grandbabby sits on her mother's lap, transfixed by the banner overhead. Inside the kitchen, Kim Williams has finished adjusting seven paper toques to fit seven grad heads and pinning seven red carnations on seven white jackets. Dennis Coskie has pulled the entire class together to tell them how proud he is of them. Fernando Scarbriel, now dressed in a black chef's outfit ("Gangsta Chef" one of the undergrads calls him) has circled the kitchen again and again in search of some small

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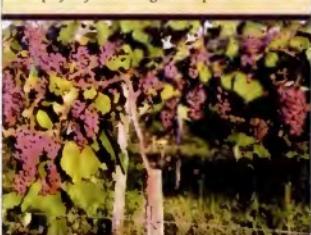
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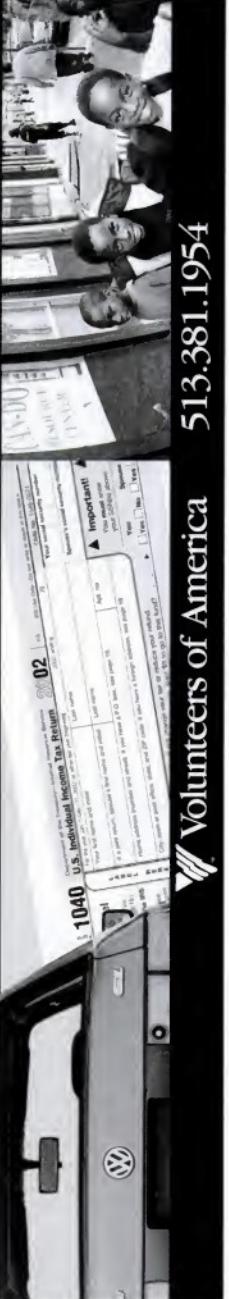


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SOUL KITCHEN

thing left undone. But every last scrap of food on the menu has been prepared and the kitchen is as clean as an operating room, so he is left with nothing to do but pose for snapshots with his graduating students.

The grads wear cotton pants and crisp white chef's jackets. Last week when the jackets arrived, John's was a little snug, and Scarbriel insisted that it be sent back for a larger one. "If there's a fire, you don't want it to be tight," he said, miming beating out flames on the dense fabric. It actually seemed to please John, this image of himself as a real chef coping with a real kitchen emergency.

The grads line up with Scarbriel in front of the serving line, waiting to go out through the swinging doors when Coskie gives the signal. They stand straight, heads held high on account of the tall hats, and from time to time one or the other of them fingers the embroidery on the jacket breast that spells out a name in scarlet thread. Janet Mobley. William Smith. Carolyn Baker. Alisha Brown. Eloise Jones. John Autenrieb. Jordan Kelly. The undergrads chatter and laugh and peek out the swinging door, but the grads are quiet, waiting for it all to begin.

And when it does, it ends with crying. Now, describing graduation at Cincinnati Cooks in order to explain why people cry is a bit like describing eggs and cheese in order to explain why people eat soufflés. Suffice it to say that there are speeches, introductions and congratulations. Each of the graduates gets a set of knives, John and Will receive awards for perfect attendance, and there's an opportunity for each grad to speak. Some of them talk about their faith, some about the challenges in their lives, and all thank their instructors for helping them succeed. Carolyn cries and Will gets choked up, and you can hear the audience heading in that direction, too.

Then it's Alisha's turn. This quiet, shy woman who had to be cajoled to smile when she arrived here 10 weeks ago takes the podium in front of the crowded room. She wants to thank Chef Fernando and Chef Dennis and Miss Kim, and she wants to explain all that has happened to her in just 10 weeks. But she is a person of few words, and so she puts it succinctly.

"You make a person want to do right," she says.

And when the sniffling dies down, it's time for lunch. G

POETS

[continued from page 79](#)

she told her husband, "you have to terrify or be terrified!"

Despite all the partying, Berryman, like many of the poets, produced a substantial amount of serious work while staying here, including a significant portion of "Homage to Mistress Bradstreet," a poem nominated for a Pulitzer in 1956. The interlude was an important factor in his development as a poet, according to John Haffenden's *Life of John Berryman*. "The peculiar success of Cincinnati was that it energized and absorbed Berryman.... Also, lionized as never before in his career, he was at last able to take the coveted role of a celebrity, and to indulge to the utmost both the courtly and the raffish sides of his personality."

With Berryman's visit the die was cast for more than a decade. A parade of famous poets, including not only Spender, Lowell and Frost, but also Peter Viereck, John Betjeman, Randall Jarrell and Karl Shapiro, came to the city each year. They lived in the Vernon Manor, the stately 1920s apartment hotel near campus, and they generally lectured in Room 127 (a large classroom) of McMicken Hall. It was not unusual for crowds of several hundred people, "town" outnumbering "gown," to flock to those lectures. Topics were often esoteric. One of Spender's programs, for example, was: "Despair in Eliot's *Wasteland* and Orwell's 1984."

The poets would also drop into brown bag lunches in the English Department and mingle with the faculty. Over time, it became customary for the Elliston poets to attend meetings of The Jolly Boys, a group of university professors who got together in people's homes to have a beer and a sandwich and read articles they were writing. Oddly, the poets were also expected to speak at Thursday gatherings set up by the late Maurice Levine of the Psychiatry Department to develop well-rounded psychiatrists. These were called "perhaps seminars"—perhaps this or perhaps that.

Then the poets would find themselves caught up in a round of social events that were often custom-tailored to fit their interests. For example, John Betjeman, the seventh Elliston lecturer and later England's poet laureate, was a noted authority on architecture, so he was taken on two tours of the city by Danny Ranshoff, one of Cincinnati's best-known civic boosters and historians. At the conclusion of his visit, Betjeman wrote a lengthy newspaper article praising the city and proclaiming the virtues

of City Hall, Mt. Adams, Columbia Parkway, the Frank Lloyd Wright house in Clifton and other sights. However, he was appalled by the city's slums, ending his article: "Oh loved Cincinnati! I bid thee farewell, Thy heights are perfection! Thy basin is hell."

Another revealing story about Lord Betjeman comes from Walter E. Langsam, son of a UC president, who recalls prevailing upon his parents to have a dinner party for the Betjemans. The president's home at the time was a grand Italian stucco house with a tile roof in Clifton. Langsam's mother was an excellent hostess, with a passion for beautiful flowers and a policy of never using any recipe twice. About a dozen people were invited for a lavish evening, and Lady Penelope came with her husband. "She was dumpy and dowdy," Langsam said. "He was dumpy too, but cute."

"The first person Lady Penelope saw when she arrived was Marion Becker [author of *The Joy of Cooking*]. They were both wearing shoes that were early Birkenstocks. They immediately recognized each other as soulmates, threw their arms around each other and spent the whole evening together."

After dinner, the Langsams gave their 22-year-old son a chance to visit with the poet. "I had a Whistler etching. I was curious about that. I think I took him upstairs to see it. He said it was a view from Fleet Street.... But he sort of dismissed me. He wanted to talk about death." Betjeman had a theory that Americans were terrified of death and couldn't bear to speak of it. When Langsam said he'd never been to a funeral, Betjeman couldn't believe it. "He said I must have. The more I denied it, the more he insisted."

STEPHEN SPENDER, The 1953 Ellison poet, was one of the most popular lecturers—once he got here, that is. The word went out that Spender had once been a Communist, and after local outcry his visa was in jeopardy. UC President Raymond Walters and a university board member went to Senator Robert Taft, who intervened with the State Department. Spender got his visa.

Sir Stephen, a gentle 6'3" Englishman who was knighted in 1983, recounts in his published journals the story of a Cincinnati evening when he was invited to a dinner party following a concert. About 2 a.m. "a lady psychologist" started describing a

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treatment that would help mental patients by reverting them to the state of babies. Before they knew it, the whole group was lying on the floor listening to soothing music while a gentle voice crooned: "Baby is in the cot. Mother loves baby. Mother pats baby."

And, added Spender, "We were not drunk or anything. The incident was carried out in a perfectly sober, business-like way."

There were, however, occasions during Spender's visit when considerable alcohol was consumed. Shortly before he was to leave the city, he planned a picnic for the many Cincinnatians who had entertained him during his stay. Liz Bettman helped him place food and liquor orders, and Ponderosa Ridge in Mt. Airy Forest was reserved. When the appointed day arrived, the weather forecast was so dire that Spender spent the afternoon writing his European friends that he was likely to be whisked away by tornados. These never materialized, and the close-knit group sat around a campfire drinking martinis, chatting about scholarly work and bantering with Spender. They also posed for the picnic photo—long-lost now, but Bettman family members recall that the snapshot captured those times perfectly.

All of the Elliston visits during the Golden Age were memorable in one way or another, and strong friendships were forged between the community and "the poets," as they came to be called. Robert Lowell, for example, told Ames and his wife how lucky they were to have such friends, "a society that cannot be equaled for charm anywhere in the United States." On one occasion Betjeman contemplated the 40 or so people around him and said that he did not think such a large group could be gathered in Birmingham, England. "Perhaps 20 in Belfast, 30 in Dublin."

IF THERE IS ONE VISIT that stands out, it is Robert Lowell's residency in 1954. Lowell's tenure as an Elliston poet is a dramatic example of the relationships forged here during the period. It also has a place in literary history.

Lowell, the fourth Elliston lecturer and winner of two Pulitzers, was a handsome Boston aristocrat who suffered from mental illness much of his life. A massive man, about 6'4" and more than 200 pounds, he was so revered that one of his former Harvard students described him recently as

"like the Dalí Lama—the second coming of Christ." Barely a week after Lowell assumed the Elliston post, his mother became ill. He left for Italy to see her, but she died before he arrived. After he buried her, he returned to Cincinnati and announced that he was divorcing his wife, Elizabeth Hardwick, to marry an Italian. Hardwick fled the city.

At that point, Lowell became increasingly unstable, talking nonstop, insulting a guest at a party held in his honor and jumping from a moving cab to keep from paying. When he lectured, he was extremely intense, laughing too much at his own jokes and going so far as to read the footnotes. He also started visiting the Gaiety, a local strip club, sometimes seeing Rose La Rose several times a day.

Pat Ford remembers having Lowell to dinner at least twice. But she said, "I found him sufficiently disturbing that I was not leaving my children with him...not that he would have hurt them."

Gilbert Bettman Jr., the Bettmans' son who now lives in California, recalls an evening when his father, Lowell and several others piled into the Bettmans' Willis jeep to go to an office and disassemble some bookcases. "Lowell was completely useless. While they worked all night, Lowell went around and had lengthy conversations with all the women cleaning the offices."

As Lowell's illness became more and more apparent, Chairman Clark took matters in hand. Calling the biggest and strongest of the English faculty into his office, he asked them to sit in the front row at Lowell's lectures to make sure there was no violence.

Lowell did, in fact, have a breakdown at one of the lectures. He lapsed into a rambling ovation on Hitler that seemed to be extolling the superman ideology. He did nothing violent, but the event was so disturbing that his sixth and final lecture was cancelled.

As Lowell became increasingly unstable, his wife attempted to get him medical treatment, but the Clarks and the Bettmans protected him, and the Bettmans even wrote encouraging letters to the Italian woman. Lowell dubbed Bettman his "lawyer," and Hardwick returned to the city for a court order to have her husband committed.

Valerie Foulkes, part of the poetry crowd and now a retired member of the English Department, says that Lowell promised to take her to a burlesque show

because she'd never seen one, but at the last minute she got a call saying he couldn't come. He was being carted off to the hospital.

He was, in fact, admitted to Jewish Hospital, where he was given warm bath treatments and electroshock therapy. By that time, the Bettmans had realized how ill Lowell really was and admitted they'd made a mistake. But their role in the whole affair did not escape notice by Lowell's biographers. Ian Hamilton's *Robert Lowell: A Biography* describes the distinguished Cincinnati couple as "misguided" and cites sources who called them "weak-minded."

SOMETIMES IN THE MID- to late '60s, the Elliston Lectures started to change. Poets still came to Cincinnati every spring ("another spring, another poet," Ames once wrote in his journal), and there were still occasional parties, but the poetry season started to lose its allure. Clark retired in 1966 and his successors made changes that altered the complexion of the program. Part of the Elliston money was redirected to fellowships, leaving fewer dollars to attract the top tier of poets. And more emphasis was placed on student involvement, less on socializing in the community.

It also became increasingly difficult to attract poets for such a long residency. Most of them eventually took teaching posts (as they generally have today) and couldn't leave their jobs for a full semester.

James Cummins, curator of the Elliston poetry collection since 1975, says that the university simply ran out of the ultra-famous. "In the '60s, the people were perfectly respectable but not Robert Lowell." During his own tenure, he adds, "We've had a Who's Who of poetry, but no one was interested."

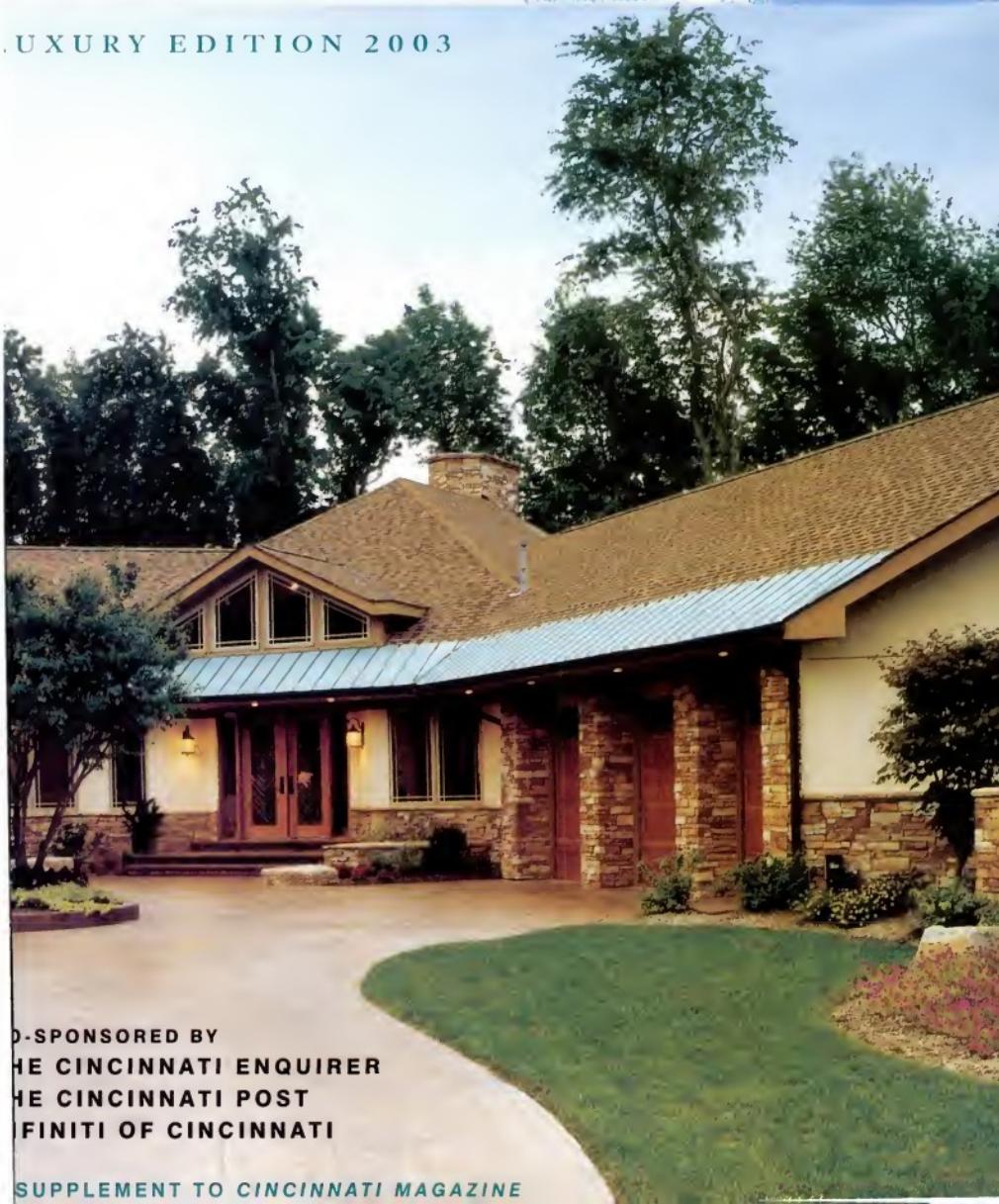
The world also changed. The wild and free postwar period in which the lectures started, when life was gay and people felt like celebrating, gave way to more serious times. Poetry lost some of its popular appeal, and more women joined the workforce, too busy to entertain.

And, of course, Cincinnati's hip literati, that unique group of well-read, fun-loving bohemians who fueled a special time in the city's history, grew old. Gradually they partied less, stopped coming to the lectures, and finally faded away. The legacy of George Elliston, the eccentric, fun-loving newspaperwoman who loved poetry, lives on. But not in the same way. ☐

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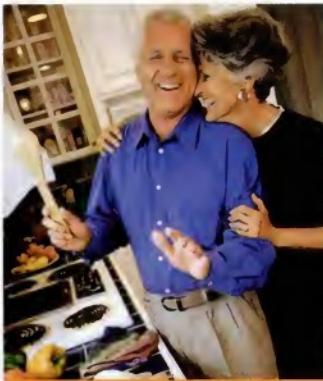
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**HOMEARAMA® LUXURY EDITION
2003 PLAN BOOK**

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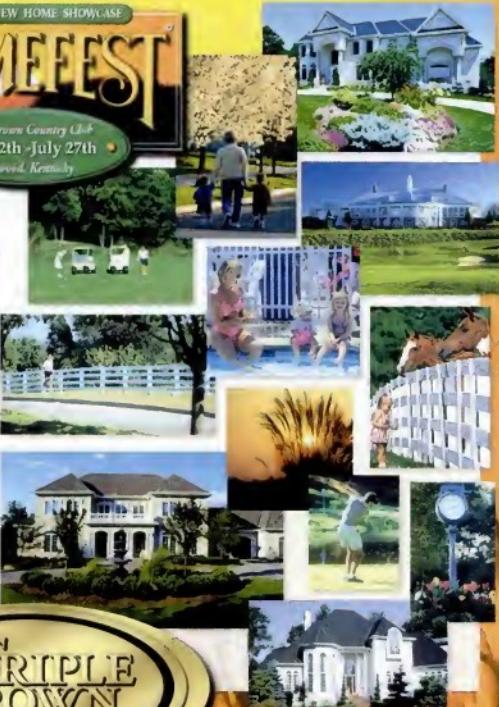
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HOMEARAMA® 2003

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ON THE COVER: Built by Eagle Custom Homes, Inc., the Frank Lloyd Wright home design captured the imaginations of last year's HOMEARAMA® visitors. It was named "Favorite Home" in the annual People's Choice Awards competition. Photograph by David Steinbrunner. This year, find the People's Choice ballot between pages 48 and 49 and cast a vote for your favorites.

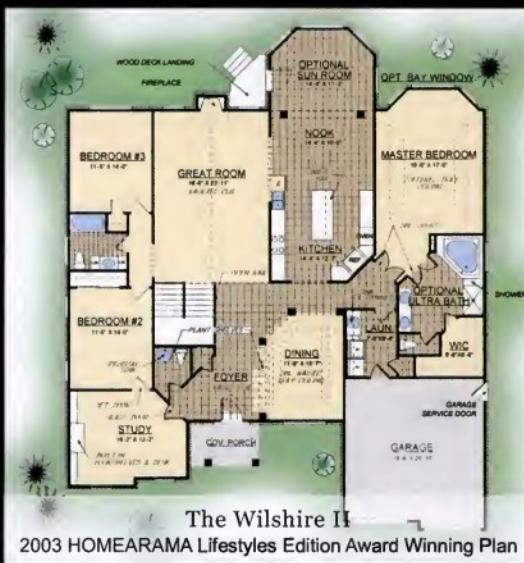
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- 128 A Tribute to Allen E. Paul**
Allen E. Paul, who died in March, was dedicated to HOMEARAMA®, the show he helped to create.



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Site of the HOMEARAMA® New Lifestyles Edition 2003



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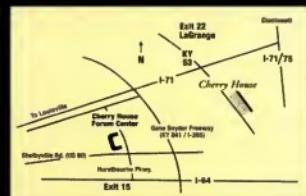
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June 2003

Welcome!



As President of the Home Builders Association (HBA) of Greater Cincinnati, it is with great pride that I welcome you to our 42nd annual HOMEARAMA®. Over its long history, our HOMEARAMA®—Luxury Edition—has become nationally recognized as one of the leading new home shows. Every year our show brings to you the latest in interior design... the newest in technology... and the best in quality craftsmanship.

A show of this magnitude doesn't happen all by itself. Our eight builders have given their all to bring you these incredible homes, but so have many other industry professionals. Hundreds have been involved with these nine homes and their work is also featured throughout the show.

Our HBA members are highly credible businessmen and women whose goal is to provide value, style and comfort for our community's housing dollars. It is with great pride and satisfaction that we in the home building industry continue to help residents of the Greater Cincinnati area attain the homes of their dreams. When you make the decision to build your dream home in the future, we certainly hope you'll contact a member of our Association.

Whether you are a prospective new home buyer or in search of innovative ideas to improve and update your existing home, we hope you'll find exactly what you're looking for here at HOMEARAMA®!

Thanks again for attending and enjoy the show!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.L."/

Darrell Leibson
President



HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF GREATER CINCINNATI

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June 2003

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The Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati is excited to present HOMEARAMA®—Luxury Edition—a showcase featuring nine exciting new homes in Vista Pointe at River's Bend.

These spectacular homes offer the ultimate in style and luxury, combined with practical features to make everyday living more comfortable and convenient. Although the design of each of these homes is unique, every participating builder shares a commitment to quality.

Vista Pointe at River's Bend is the latest neighborhood in the River's Bend community to be developed. This will be the third time in four years that a River's Bend neighborhood has hosted the show... a testament to what the public and show builders think of the development. For the first time in HOMEARAMA® history, every home in this year's show is priced over \$1 million.

Please take the time to examine closely the design, workmanship and special features of our HOMEARAMA® homes as well as the incredible surroundings River's Bend has to offer.

I sincerely hope that you leave today with fresh ideas and new concepts that will be helpful in your own home building or remodeling projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Wieland".

Jeff Wieland
General Chairman



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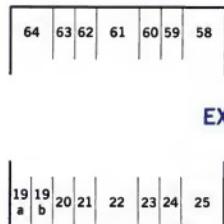
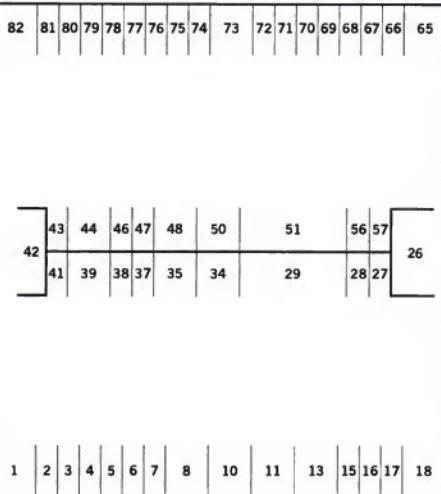
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2	Neal's Remodeling	Home Remodeling	45	New Journey	Portable Sauna Systems
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11	The Habegger Corporation-Bryant	Heating, Cooling Products	53	Nightwatch Security Systems	Residential Alarm Systems
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42	R.J. O'Connor & Associates	Swanson Solid Surface Products			
43	Mid-America Glass Block	Glass Block Products			

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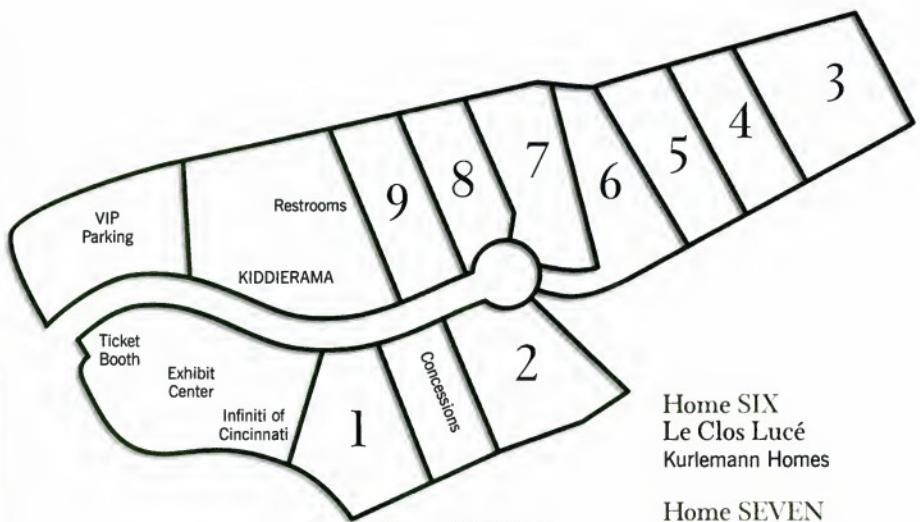
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The Allaire
Daniels Homes

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Abbington Hall
Hensley Homes, Inc.

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Sanneman Homes, Inc.

Home SIX
Le Clos Lucé
Kurleemann Homes

Home SEVEN
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HOURS: Weekday, 4-11 pm; weekends, noon-11 pm. No admission after 9:30 pm.

ADMISSION: \$8, adults; children 12 and under will be admitted free if accompanied by an adult.

PARKING: Free parking; follow HOMEARAMA® signs.

DIRECTIONS: I-71 north or south to Exit 28. Drive south on Route 48. Follow the signs to HOMEARAMA® parking.

INFORMATION: Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati, (513) 851-6300.

They said we couldn't call it “Floorarama.”

But, hey, everyone's entitled to their own opinion.

So maybe the homes are the stars of the show, but have you seen the FLOORS! If it seems like everywhere you turn at HOMEARAMA® 2003, you find great carpet, hardwood, ceramic and other flooring, it's because 6 out of 9 homes have flooring brought to you by JP Flooring. This year – and for the past 15 years – JP Flooring

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(859) 781-2233

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Cincinnati, OH 45208
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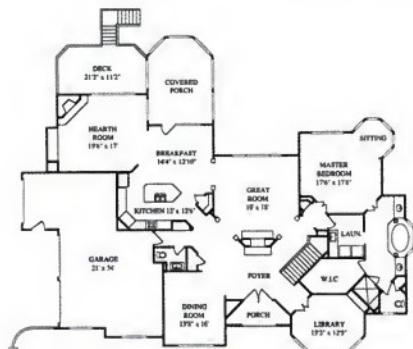


The Sonoma

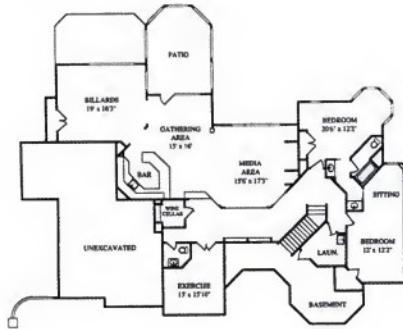
Hering Homes, Inc.

4931 Delhi Pike
Cincinnati, Ohio 45238
(513) 922-4663

www.heringhomes.com



■ MAIN LEVEL



■ LOWER LEVEL



Tony Hering
Builder



Karen Sacksteder
Interior Designer

Casual California elegance and classic European romance complement each other like form and function in The Sonoma, a 5,711-square-foot ranch with many unique features—including turrets, walls with unusual angles and a generous use of art and etched glass.

The angular, open floor plan and rich, warm-toned décor provide a showcase for a custom, mantel-style wooden exhaust vent over the kitchen range, a stained-glass dome in the sitting alcove of the master suite and a see-through fireplace in the combination foyer and great room.

The Sonoma also makes good use of natural elements with its granite countertops, a stone fireplace in the hearth room and a covered porch adjacent to the kitchen that is attached to an upper-level deck.

One of the most unique aspects of the home is its multi-level lower area, which houses a wine cellar with etched glass entry doors and windows, a professional quality home theater, billiard room, exercise area and a bar/pub.

The Sonoma marks Tony Hering's HOMEARAMA® debut. By age 20, he had established Hering Construction, a carpentry company specializing in upscale homes and projects. He launched Hering Homes, Inc. in 1994.

The Sonoma's designers are Mike Frimming, plan designer, Studer Residential Designs; Karen Sacksteder, interior designer, Sacksteder's Interiors; Dave Hafner, landscape designer, Hafner Enterprises. —Rose Huber

Offered by Kelley Sheakley Dreisbach of Hering Homes, Inc.,
The Sonoma is expected to sell for \$1 million.

*Information supplied by Hering Homes, Inc. and Karen Sacksteder
of Sacksteder's Interiors.*

Design Notes

THE SONOMA vendors/suppliers

Gary Bachman and Sons ■ Builders FirstSource ■ Central Light ■ Cincinnati Bell Security ■ Closets by Design ■ Custom Distributors ■ Hackney Custom Carpentry ■ Hafner Enterprises ■ J&S Builders ■ Robert Jones Plumbing ■ Keidel Bath & Plumbing ■ L & L Ornamental Iron ■ NK Stone ■ Overhead Door of Covington ■ Pella Windows and Doors ■ Sacksteder's Interiors ■ Schoch Tile & Carpet ■ Sims-Lohman Cabinet Co. ■ Sound Waves ■ Stained Glass Overlay ■ Stone Center ■ Watson's ■ Western Hills Builder Supply ■ Wine Cellar Innovations

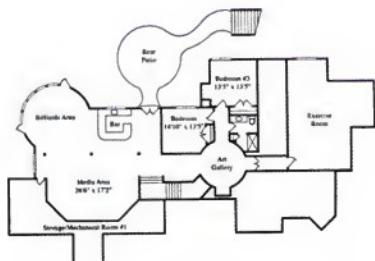


The Allaire

Daniels Homes

9370 Main St., Ste. A
Cincinnati, Ohio 45242
(513) 791-6898

www.danielshomes.com





Jim Daniels
Builder



Nancy Paul
Interior Designer

The University of Cincinnati graduate is a long-time HOMEARAMA® participant with dozens of awards to his credit.

The Allaire's designers are Mark Dierkers, architect, Norris and Dierkers Architects/Planners, Inc.; Nancy Paul, interior designer, Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell; Jim Seiler, landscape designer, Seiler's Landscaping. —Rose Huber

Offered by Jan Gerdig of Builder Resources, The Allaire is expected to sell for \$1.3 million.

Information supplied by Daniels Homes and Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell.

THE ALLAIRE vendors/suppliers

AE Door Sales ■ Allmyer Tile Co. ■ Angert's Appliances ■ Apex Engineering ■ BASCO Shower Doors of Elegance ■ Becker Electric Supply ■ Bockrath Heating & Cooling ■ Botanica ■ Ursula J. Brenner ■ Broad Spectrum Decorative Paint Finishes ■ Closets & More ■ Construction Trade Services ■ Custom Electronic Designs ■ DG Drywall ■ Flash & Seal ■ Jaime Frechette ■ Giovanni Concrete ■ The Great Indoors ■ Hall Plastering ■ Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell ■ J & N Distribution & Design ■ Jerry Jacobs Excavating ■ Jim's Tile & Trenching ■ J.P. Flooring Systems ■ Kapital Construction ■ Keidel Bath & Plumbing ■ Kemper Design Center ■ L & I Custom Walls, Inc. ■ M & M Plumbing ■ Malton Gallery ■ William McConnehee Brick Cleaning ■ Multi-Source, Inc. ■ Norris & Dierkers Architects ■ Norwalk—The Furniture Idea ■ Overhead Door of Cincinnati ■ Paradigm Creations of Wyoming ■ Pella Windows and Doors ■ Porter Paints ■ Power Electric ■ Rains Landscaping ■ The Riemeyer Lumber Co. ■ RKC Increte Systems, Inc. ■ The Rug Gallery ■ Ryan's All Glass ■ Sardinia Concrete ■ Secured Plumbing ■ Seiler's Landscaping ■ Settle Builders Supply ■ Stained Glass Overlay ■ Take It For Granite ■ Ron Temple Construction ■ Terry Corp. ■ Thomasville Home Furnishings by Furniture Fair ■ Anthony Torres Painting ■ Vanderwist of Cincinnati, Inc. ■ Watson's ■ Welch Sand & Gravel

Design Notes

HOME 3



Abbington Hall

Hensley Homes, Inc.

11821 Mason-Montgomery Rd.

Cincinnati, Ohio 45249

(513) 677-9908

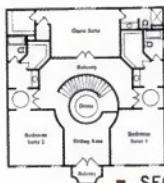
www.hensleyhomes.com



■ MAIN LEVEL



■ LOWER LEVEL



■ SECOND LEVEL



**Tim Hensley
Builder**



Greg Hensley
Builder



Henry T. Vittetoe III
Interior Designer

The majesty of the Old South is graciously escorted into the 21st century in Abbington Hall, an 8,450-square-foot retreat that boasts such Southern colonial touches as period stone, hand-molded, cut bricks, metal gates and railings, and an ornate crystal chandelier. The exterior of the home reflects the ambiance of a bygone era with its large, two-story columns, a stone turret and a uniquely-gated court-

Inside, natural materials and artistry take center stage with such features as beamed ceilings, limestone floors, granite countertops, custom moldings and high ceilings and doors. For example, there are 10-foot ceilings and eight-foot doors on the first floor and lower level. Additional amenities include a grand salon, a music room and a towering staircase roundabout with domed ceiling.

Other features include a two-story solarium, a wine room/wet bar adjacent to the kitchen, a covered veranda equipped with a built-in, outdoor grill and large, rear decks (with a hot tub) that overlook five acres of countryside and creeks. Abbington Hall plays the perfect host with its lower level, the hub of which is its central media room. Other features include a private guest suite, an exer-

Exercise room and sauna, a stone bar, game and billiard room.

Hensley Homes, Inc. has been building custom homes in Greater Cincinnati since its founding by brothers Greg and Tim Hensley in 1985. A regular participant in HOMEARAMA®, Hensley Homes, Inc. has garnered hundreds of awards over the years.

Abbington Hall's designers are Paul Studer, plan designer, Studer Residential Designs; Henry T. Vittetoe III, interior designer, Vittetoe Interior Designs, Inc. and The Cherry House Furniture Galleries of LaGrange, Ky.; Noah Wollum, landscape designer, Noah's Farms. —Rose Huber

Offered by Carol Harris of Comey and Shepherd, Abington Hall is expected to sell for \$1.30 million.

Information supplied by Hensley Homes, Inc.
and Henry T. Vittetoe III of Vittetoe Interior Designs, Inc.

ABBINGTON HALL vendors/suppliers

American Wood Flooring ■ Central Light ■ The Cherry House Furniture Galleries ■ J.P. Flooring Systems ■ Kemper Tile ■ Gary Lord Wall Options and Associates, Inc. ■ John Tisdel Distributing, Inc. ■ Vittetoe Interior Designs, Inc. ■ West Chester Billiards



Emma's Place

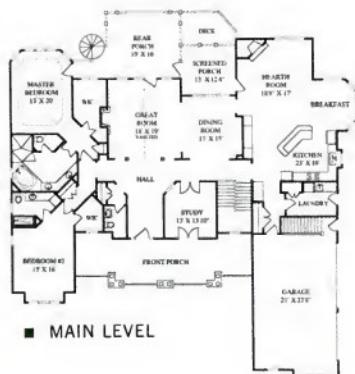
deStefano Custom Builders, LLC

9246 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd.

West Chester, Ohio 45069

(513) 755-8801

www.destefanocustombuilders.com





Dan deStefano
Builder



Steve deStefano
Builder



Rocky deStefano
Builder



June Surber
Interior Designer

A Nantucket, coastal motif captures the relaxed elegance requested by the owners of Emma's Place, a 6,200-square-foot cottage-style ranch named after the couple's young daughter. Open and breezy, the home makes the most of natural light with a multitude of strategically placed windows that overlook outdoor living spaces.

The East Coast design of Emma's Place borrows an element of classic Southern living with its long, covered front porch, which is enhanced by the home's painted, brick-and-stone exterior and copper roof.

June Surber Interior features include granite countertops and backsplashes in the kitchen, a study with French doors and access to the front porch and a theater/bar and entertainment center on the lower level.
Interior Designer

Designed for relaxed living and entertaining, this home is loaded with fine woodworking that includes hardwood floors, custom wood inlays and an abundance of details.

Steve deStefano launched his company after 15 years of upscale remodeling work in some of Greater Cincinnati's exclusive residential neighborhoods. A graduate of the University of Cincinnati, he heads a company that includes his sons Dan and Rocky. In their HOMEARAMA® debut two years ago, the deStefanos garnered 12 honors, including People's Choice awards for both Favorite Home and Favorite Landscaping. HOMEARAMA® 2002, likewise, brought more awards.

Emma's Place designers are Mary Cassinelli, architect, Mary Cassinelli—Architect; June Surber, interior designer, June Surber & Associates; Pinecrest Nursery & Garden Center, landscape design. —Rose Huber

Emma's Place is sold at \$1.14 million.

Information supplied by deStefano Custom Builders, LLC and June Surber,
of June Surber & Associates.

EMMA'S PLACE vendors/suppliers

Becker Electric Supply ■ Brick Tec ■ Rich Bryant Marble and Tile ■ Mary Cassinelli—Architect ■ Cincinnati Stair ■ Custom Distributors ■ Dempsey and Siders ■ Dupp's Plumbing ■ Ernst Concrete ■ Excel Painting Company ■ Flash & Seal ■ Frank's Glass ■ Frey Electric ■ Henry Excavating ■ Homestead Cabinet Company ■ IQ Ceramic Tile ■ Jaco Waterproofing ■ JG Construction ■ June Surber & Associates ■ Keidel Bath & Plumbing ■ Kirkwood's Sweeper Shop ■ Kleingers and Associates ■ Loomis Interior Trim Co. ■ M and M Drywall Supply ■ Masterwalls ■ MC Steel and Crane ■ McSwain Carpets ■ Mollett Seamless Gutter Company Inc. ■ Montgomery Hardwood Flooring ■ Mueller Roofing Distributors ■ Nisbet Brower Building Solutions ■ Overhead Door of Cincinnati ■ Pella Windows and Doors ■ Peoples Community Bank ■ Phantom Sound ■ Pinecrest Nursery & Garden Center ■ Queen City Lawn Care ■ Rural Natural Gas ■ Sims-Lohman Cabinet Co. ■ Smokey Inc. ■ Stone Experts ■ Take it For Granite ■ Wallmasters ■ Welch Sand & Gravel ■ Willis Heating and Air Conditioning

Design Notes



The Andréa

Sanneman Homes, Inc.

6625 Irwin Simpson Rd.

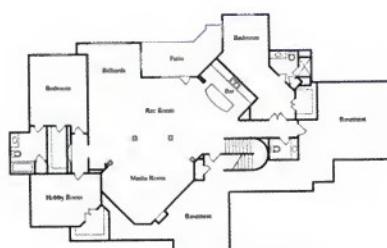
Cincinnati, Ohio 45040

(513) 398-3300

www.sannemanhomes.com



■ MAIN LEVEL



■ LOWER LEVEL



Bryan Sanneman
Builder



Nancy Bonar
Interior Designer

Flowing lines and soft curves create an architectural canvas in The Andréa, a 6,200-square-foot Riviera-style residence with such fluid features as a curved stairwell accented with columns and arched windows, multi-layered, curved soffits and an oval fireplace wall with lighted niches designed for artwork.

Tranquil tones of gold, green and brown enhance the canvas of the home, which carries the circular motif into the kitchen's raised island and granite surfaces. Mosaic glass encircles the raised bar, forming a backsplash. Decorative glass is likewise showcased in the guest bath.

The Andréa also includes a master suite with an adjacent exercise room, a home theater with beamed ceilings and separate television area along with two lower-level bedroom suites, a free-standing, 14-foot gas fireplace and other amenities.

Cincinnati native Bryan Sanneman, a fourth-generation builder, made his mark in the industry as one of the region's youngest builders. The 32-year-old graduate of the University of Cincinnati constructed his first home in 1993 and founded his own company in 1996. A HOMEARAMA® veteran, he is the recipient of numerous awards, including many for HOMEARAMA® 2002.

The Andréa's designers are Mike Studer, home designer, Studer Residential Design; Nancy Bonar, interior designer, Interiors by Design; Steve Lichtenberg, landscape designer, Lichtenberg Landscaping. —Rose Huber

The Andréa is sold at \$1 million.

Information supplied by Sanneman Homes, Inc. and Nancy Bonar of Interiors by Design.

Design Notes

THE ANDRÉA vendors/suppliers

Abercrombie & Associates ■ AE Door Sales ■ Angert's Appliances ■ Baker Furniture ■ Ballard Designs ■ Mark C. Barnett ■ Becker Electric Supply ■ Bowlin Electric ■ Buckeye HVAC ■ Central Light ■ Cincinnati Stair ■ The Dapper Company ■ Ernst Concrete ■ Ferguson Bath & Kitchen Gallery ■ Floral Accents ■ Frontgate Outlet Center ■ H & H Plumbing ■ Horizons Landscape and Irrigation, Inc. ■ Hyde Park Lumber ■ Interiors by Design ■ J.P. Flooring Systems ■ Keidel Bath & Plumbing ■ Kemper Tile ■ Lichtenberg Landscaping ■ Joni McEachern ■ Meyer Poured Concrete Walls ■ Miller Roofing ■ Miss Elaineous ■ Mollett Seamless Gutter Company, Inc. ■ Montgomery Cyclery and Fitness ■ Montgomery Hardwood Flooring ■ Nava Brick Laying ■ Paradigm Creations of Wyoming ■ Pella Windows and Doors ■ Porter Paints ■ Premiere Custom Painting ■ Ryan's All Glass ■ Settle Builders Supply ■ Sound Security Stone Experts ■ Studer Residential Design ■ Thal Drywall ■ TNT Concrete ■ Truss Design ■ Welch Sand & Gravel ■ West Chester Billiards ■ West Chester Excavating

HOME 6



Le Clos Lucé

Kurleemann Homes

7791 Joan Dr.

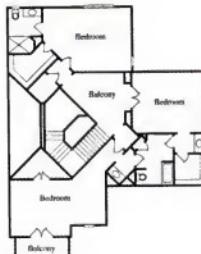
West Chester, Ohio 45069

(513) 755-9737

www.kurleemannhomes.com



■ MAIN LEVEL



■ SECOND LEVEL



■ LOWER LEVEL



Bernie Kurlemann
Builder



Nancy Paul
Interior Designer

nati, and earned a master's of business administration at Xavier University.

Le Close Lucé designers are Studer Residential Designs, plan design; Nancy Paul, interior designer, Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell; Thornton Landscaping, landscape design. —Rose Huber

Co-offered by Diane Tafuri of Sibcy Cline and Marilyn Hines of Comey and Shepherd, Le Clos Lucé is expected to sell for \$1,249,000.

*Information supplied by Kurlemann Homes and Nancy Paul of
Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell.*

LE CLOS LUCÉ vendors/suppliers

AE Door Sales ■ AM Peck Company ■ Artwork ■ BASCO Shower Doors of Elegance ■ B&J Stone ■ Bed, Bath & Beyond ■ Botanica ■ Bowlin Electric ■ Broad Spectrum Decorative Paint Finishes ■ C&W Woodworking ■ Central Light ■ Charles Grund ■ Cincinnati Stair ■ Custom Distributors ■ Ernst Concrete ■ H&H Plumbing ■ Dan Horn Woodworking ■ Greg Houge ■ Hyde Park Lumber ■ Indus Grand Entrances & Windows ■ Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell ■ JB Sales ■ J&N Distribution & Design ■ J.P. Flooring Systems ■ Jansen Insulation ■ William Johnson Framing ■ Keidel Bath & Plumbing ■ Kemper Design Center ■ The Kennedy Company ■ Brian Kist Electric ■ Knickerbocker Gallery ■ Ed Kuhl Tile ■ Martin Marietta ■ McAlpine Painting ■ McGill Smith Punshon, Inc. ■ Miller Roofing ■ Mollett Seamless Gutter Company, Inc. ■ Montgomery Hardwood Flooring ■ Mt. Crowe Plumbing ■ Multi-Source, Inc. ■ NK Stone ■ Nava Brick Laying ■ Noah's Farm ■ The Rug Gallery ■ Schnatter Heating ■ Settle Builders Supply ■ Stone Center ■ Studer Residential Design ■ TNT Concrete ■ Thal Drywall ■ Thomasville Home Furnishings by Furniture Fair ■ Thornton Landscaping ■ Tile by Lang ■ Trademark Drywall ■ Tri State Superior Walls ■ Truss Design ■ Walls of Steel ■ Watson Gravel ■ Welch Sand & Gravel ■ Z Gallery

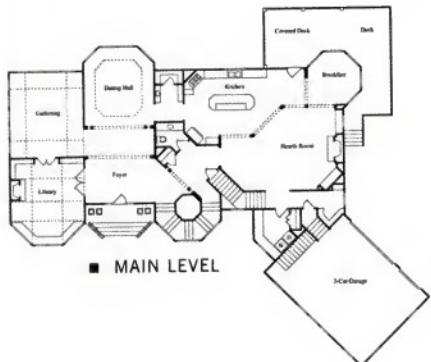
Design Notes



Windsor Manor

Eagle Custom Homes, Inc.
411 W. Loveland Ave., Ste. 202
Loveland, Ohio 45140
(513) 965-0455

www.eaglecustomhomes.com





**John Ballantyne, Doug Feagles
Builders**



Kurt Bietenduvel
Interior Designer

Eagle Custom Homes, Inc. was established in 1994 by Doug and Sharon Feagles and John Ballantyne. A regular HOMEARAMA® participant, the company received national attention (as well as numerous awards) at last year's show with its Frank Lloyd Wright home.

Windsor Manor's designers are Kenneth R. Bowerman, architect; Kenneth R. Bowerman Architect; Kur Bietenduvel, interior designer; Valerie Makstell Interiors; Andy Doesburg, landscape designer; Thornton Landscaping. —Rose Huber

Offered by Doug Feagles of Eagle Custom Homes, Inc.,
Windsor Manor is sold for \$1,245 million.

Information supplied by Eagle Custom Homes, Inc. and Kurt Bietenduel
of Valerie Makstall Interiors

WINDSOR MANOR vendors/suppliers

Brick Tec ■ Central Light ■ Cincinnati Marble ■ C.W. Marble ■ Homestead Cabinet Company ■ Innerwood & Co. ■ J & N Distribution & Design ■ J.P. Flooring Systems ■ JPS ■ Kemper Design Center ■ Kemper Tile ■ Valerie Makstell Interiors ■ Schumacher and Company ■ Sound Advice ■ Thornton Landscaping ■ John Tisdel Distributing, Inc.

Design Notes



Grandstone Manor

Rookwood Construction and Development, LLC

266 East Sharon Rd.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246
(513) 272-3540

www.rookwoodhomes.com





Brian Sims
Builder



David A. Millett
Interior Designer

An abundance of windows, a conservatory and meditation garden set the stage for Grandstone Manor, a 7,200-square-foot home designed especially for entertaining and relaxation. Stone, wood shake shingles, copper, brick and glass are combined in an exterior that is reflective of an English country manor. The ambiance continues inside in the two-story entrance foyer, which is flanked by a formal dining room and library.

The living room of Grandstone Manor is highlighted by floor-to-ceiling windows while the gathering area of the home features a fireplace bracketed by open-view, curio cabinets positioned on raised platforms. Gently curving, arched doorways connect various rooms and areas of the home.

Unusually high cabinets and double islands add drama to the kitchen. This space is integrated into a hearth room and conservatory that showcase a glass, vaulted ceiling.

The main level master suite features a meditation garden, which may be viewed from both the bedroom and bath. The lower level of Grandstone Manor presents such bonuses as a redwood wine cellar and tasting area enclosed by three panels of art glass showcasing geisha figures. Neighboring spaces include a media room with stadium seating, an exercise area and plenty of leisure space—in shades of Chinese red and navy blue complemented with Oriental accessories.

Rookwood was established in 1981 by Larry Sims. The father/son duo are regulars at HOMEARAMA® with a number of awards to their credit, including four honors in the 2002 show.

Grandstone Manor's designers are Larry Sims, architect, Rookwood Construction and Development, LLC; David Millett, interior designer, David A. Millett, Inc.; Matt Mullens, landscape designer, M&M Land Designs. —Rose Huber

*Offered by Gloria Welage of Comey and Shepherd,
Grandstone Manor is sold for \$1.3 million.*

*Information supplied by Rookwood Construction and Development, LLC
and David Millett of David A. Millett, Inc.*

GRANDSTONE MANOR vendors/suppliers

AE Door Sales ■ Allmeyer Tile Co. ■ American Heating & Cooling ■ Angert's Appliances ■ Brick Tec ■ C&W Woodworking ■ Central Light ■ Curran Drywall ■ The Dapper Company ■ Delta Framing ■ Deyhle Electric ■ Dupps Plumbing ■ Indus Grand Entrances & Windows ■ Ernst Concrete ■ Flash & Seal ■ G&J Enterprises ■ Hyde Park Lumber ■ IQ Ceramic Tile ■ J & N Distribution & Design ■ J.P. Flooring Systems ■ Jorel Construction ■ Kiedel Bath & Plumbing ■ M&M Land Design ■ McGill Smith Punshon, Inc. ■ David A. Millett, Inc. ■ Mueller Roofing Distributors ■ Myers Poured Wall ■ Nisbet Lumber ■ Pella Windows and Doors ■ Porter Paints ■ Right Touch Painting ■ Joseph Sallee Roofing ■ Schumacher and Company ■ Shawnee Custom Homes ■ Sound Security ■ John Tisdell Distributing, Inc. ■ Wine Cellar Innovations

Design Notes

HOME 9



Vista's Jewel

deStefano Custom Builders, LLC

9246 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd.

West Chester, Ohio 45069

(513) 755-8801

www.destefanocustombuilders.com





Dan deStefano
Builder



Steve deStefano
Builder



Rocky deStefano
Builder



June Surber
Interior Designer

Architectural drama takes center stage in Vista's Jewel, an 8,123-square-foot multi-level English country manor with soaring roof lines, a stone turret and two-tiered, slate front porch. The intrigue continues indoors with an illuminated, coffered, barrel vaulted ceiling in the entrance foyer, a wood-paneled mezzanine library with coffered ceilings, a three-story, open stair-case along with wrought iron railing throughout the home. Vista's Jewel also features a kitchen with custom-glazed cabinets and access to a rear porch and a master retreat, both with fireplaces.

An outdoor stone walkway, built over a brook that cascades down a stone wall, leads to a lower level walkout. Billed as a "living experience," it features a two-tiered cinema that resembles a tasting room attached to a rustic rathskeller and a copper-top bar. And his company after 15 years of upscale remodeling work in some of the residential neighborhoods. A graduate of the University of Cincinnati, it includes his sons Dan and Rocky. In their HOMEARAMA® debut, they received 12 honors, including People's Choice awards for both Favorite Building.

Vista's Jewel designers are Mary Cassinelli, architect, Mary Cassinelli—Architect; June Surber, interior designer, June Surber & Associates; Pinecrest Nursery & Garden Center, landscape design. —Rose Huber

Offered by Gail Fogle of Builder Resources, Vista's Jewel is expected to sell for \$1,398,000.

Information supplied by deStefano Custom Builders, LLC,
and June Surber of June Surber & Associates.

VISTA'S JEWEL vendors/suppliers

Becker Electric Supply ■ Brick Tec ■ Rick Bryant Marble and Tile ■ Mary Cassinelli—Architect ■ Cincinnati Stair ■ Custom Distributors ■ Dempsey and Siders ■ Dupp's Plumbing ■ Ernst Concrete ■ Excel Painting Company ■ Flash & Seal ■ Frank's Glass ■ Frey Electric ■ Henry Excavating ■ Homestead Cabinet Company ■ Indus Grand Entrances & Windows ■ Jaco Waterproofing ■ JG Construction ■ June Surber & Associates ■ KAB Construction ■ Keidel Bath & Plumbing ■ Kemper Design Center ■ Kleingers and Associates ■ M and M Drywall Supply ■ Masterwalls ■ MC Steel and Crane ■ McSwain Carpets ■ Mollett Seamless Gutter Company, Inc. ■ Montgomery Hardwood Flooring ■ Mueller Roofing Distributors ■ Nisbet Brower Building Solutions ■ Overhead Door of Cincinnati ■ Peoples Community Bank ■ Pinecrest Nursery & Garden Center ■ Precision Masonry ■ Queen City Lawn Care ■ Rural Natural Gas ■ Sims-Lohman Cabinet Co. ■ Smokey, Inc. ■ Sound Security ■ Stone Experts ■ Take It For Granite ■ Wallmasters ■ Welch Sand & Gravel ■ Willis Heating and Air Conditioning ■ Wine Cellar Innovations ■ Wooden Nickel Antiques & Gardens

Design Notes

A

Abercrombie & Associates.....	513-385-5757
AE Door Sales.....	513-742-1984
AM Peck Company	513-621-3021
Allmyer Tile Co.	513-779-1136
American Heating & Cooling	513-471-2115
American Wood Flooring	513-797-8800
Angert's Appliances	513-541-7668
Apex Engineering	1-513-424-5202
Artwork	513-791-6116
B&J Stone	513-615-1015
Gary Bachman and Sons	513-941-2772
Baker Furniture	513-731-2364
Ballard Designs	513-603-1333
Mark C. Barnett	513-607-5701

B

BASCO Shower Doors of Elegance	513-573-1900
Becker Electric Supply	513-771-2550
Bed, Bath & Beyond	513-731-5170
Bockrath Heating & Cooling	513-965-0023
Botanica	513-489-9484
Bowlin Electric	513-708-6090
Ursula J. Brenner	513-521-0584
Brick Toe	513-831-0012
Broad Spectrum	
Decorative Paint Finishes	513-542-5353
Rick Bryant Marble and Tile	513-623-1071
Buckeye HVAC	513-894-5755
Builders FirstSource	513-931-6300

C

C&W Woodworking	513-754-8199
Mary Cassinelli, Architect	513-321-5556
Central Light	513-891-1111
The Cherry House Furniture Galleries	502-222-0343
Cincinnati Bell Security	513-397-1332
Cincinnati Marble	513-541-8883
Cincinnati Stair	513-722-3947
Closets & More	513-761-6673
Closets by Design	513-469-7900
Construction Trade Services	513-891-5591
Curran Drywall	513-777-7753
Custom Distributors	513-874-5444
Custom Electronic Designs	513-631-4425
C.W. Marble	513-398-3700

D

DG Drywall	513-779-0162
The Dapper Company	513-683-2194
Delta Framing	513-272-3540
Dempsey and Siders	513-891-4400
Deyhle Electric	513-489-2240
Dupps Plumbing	513-874-8899

E

Ernst Concrete	513-874-8300
Excel Painting Company	513-315-1028

F

Ferguson Bath & Kitchen Gallery	513-771-6000
Flash & Seal	513-869-3727
Floral Accents	513-759-9311
Frank's Glass	513-755-8313
Jalime Frechette	513-729-0293
Frey Electric	513-385-0700
Frontgate Outlet Center	513-603-1444

G

G&J Enterprises	513-932-5733
Giovanni Concrete	513-844-8786
The Great Indoors	513-346-1506
Charles Grund Decorative Arts	513-702-2887

H

Hackney Custom Carpentry	513-617-9585
Hafner Enterprises	513-941-9814
Hall Plastering	513-321-2914
H & H Plumbing	513-829-0891
Henry Excavating	513-779-1386
Homestead Cabinets Company	513-759-9370
Horizons Landscape and Irrigation, Inc.	513-379-4154
Greg House	513-625-1238
Dan Horn Woodworking	513-683-3640
Hyde Park Lumber	513-271-1500

I

Indus Grand Entrances & Windows	513-241-1551
Inwood & Co.	513-831-5990
Interiors by Design	513-777-2272
Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell	513-794-0300

J

J8 Sales	513-886-1227
J&N Distribution & Design	513-993-9979
J&S Builders	513-598-6299
Jaco Waterproofing	800-410-5226
Jerry Jacobs Excavating	513-385-5058
Jansen Insulation	859-727-0066
JG Construction	513-317-2566
Jim's Tile & Trenching	513-777-3891
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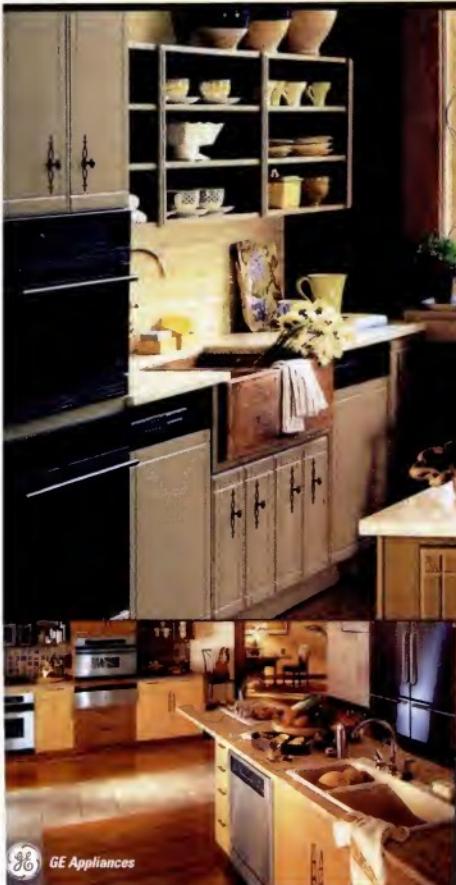
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BY ELISSA SONNENBERG

Space Pads



oving sidewalks. Video phones. Reminders from electronic assistants. Food cooked perfectly with the touch of a button. A day in the life of the Jetsons—the cartoon icons of mid-21st century living—continues to creep closer to reality as space-age technological advances and a gadget-friendly public feed today's booming consumer electronics industry.

"People want the latest and greatest," says Doug Kauffman, regional commercial manager for appliance retailer hh Gregg.

In the past decade, he's seen manufacturer supply and customer demand speed an exciting revolution in home technology. Now tech-savvy homeowners can control their houses' lighting, security and thermostat from personal computers anywhere in the world, or close all their window shades with a point and a click.

"It used to be the appliance industry was kind of boring," Kauffman admits. He remembers when major appliance makers updated their wares every seven years instead of the near-monthly upgrades available today. "Things are constantly changing, and I don't know that anybody sees an end to it."

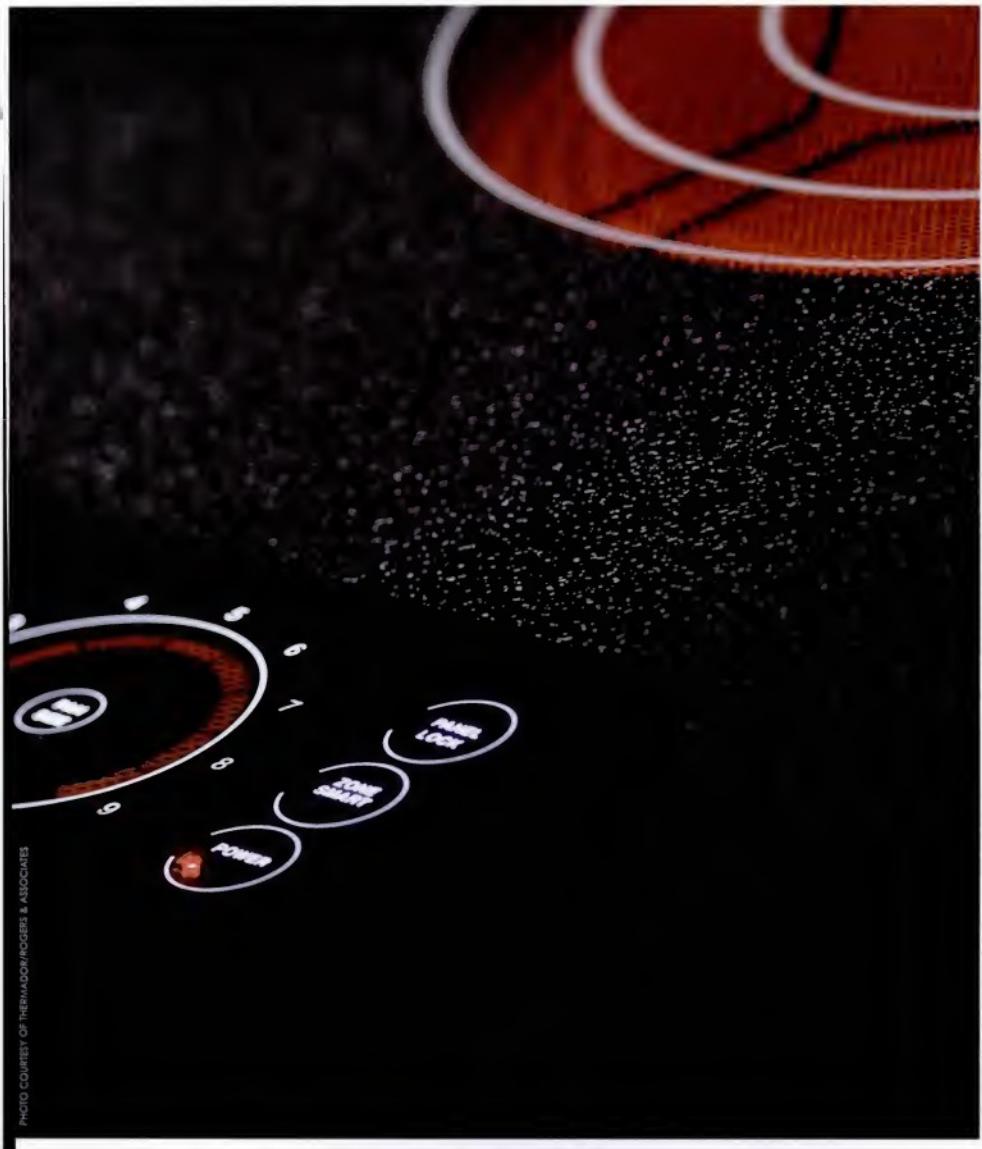


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PHOTO COURTESY OF SUB-ZERO/WOLF

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FRESH IDEAS:

New refrigerator models, like Sub-Zero's drawer units (above) and LGE's Internet Digital DIOS Refrigerator (right), come loaded with modern options.

The latest high-tech products often cost outrageous sums when they debut, as companies price them to offset research and development investments. But the rapid-moving market insures that even the most expensive models don't stay that way for long. Heated competition between brands and new product development help sustain the consumer electronics business, which reached nearly \$100 billion in 2002 alone, according to the Consumer Electronics Association, a trade organization.

With so much money at stake, engineers and manufacturers continue to aim for broader consumer markets. Today's electronic offerings fit into every room of the house and change everything from mundane daily routines to extravagant entertaining options. They provide more than sleek designs and trendy human interfaces, too. As Kauffman sees it, new inventions succeed when they focus on the most precious commodity that homeowners treasure. "Everything today is about time," he explains.

Modern life, with its jam-packed day planners and mobile necessities, brings with it a new generation of responsibilities. And as demands on time increase, so does the need for easing the associated stress and strain. "You have to sort and juggle," Kauffman says.

Manufacturers also fine-tune their products with an eye toward uniquely modern sensitivities. Conserving natural resources. Filtering media content. Ensuring proper nutrition. Electronic solutions to homeowner concerns can be as complicated as the homeowners' needs. While trends still drive customer awareness, personal preferences take priority. Whether consumers want a basic home safety system, a home theater that rivals commercial multiplexes or an advanced network that connects every electronic device in their house, options for creating customized homes continue to expand as quickly as their imaginations, and budgets, allow.

Space-Age Kitchen Basics

Perhaps nowhere is technology in the home more obvious or heavily used than in kitchens. The kitchen now serves as the focal point of home life—where work, play, meals and entertaining meet. In turn, kitchen appliances have evolved from utilitarian boxes with limited capabilities to finely crafted tools, some of which provide as much advice as they do power.

"Appliances just get higher tech all the time," says Lee Rose, a certified kitchen and bath designer at Kemper Design Center. "I generally refer people to appliance experts because there is so much out there, it's a full-time job to keep up with it."

Still, as technology expands, so does the awareness of new kitchen consumers. Gone are the days when cooks asked for a complete line of products from the same manufacturer. "People are very specific to their own needs," Rose explains. "[They] buy one [brand] of this and one of that."

Since every day includes multiple trips to the refrigerator, new versions of the only appliance in the house that stays on all the time continue to reach new technological heights. The high-end Sub-Zero line of refrigerators includes drawer units that can be placed throughout the home, from the kitchen to the bedroom to the outdoor patio. The line also includes a dual refrigeration system with two separate cooling elements—one for the refrigerator, one for the freezer—that keep air from transferring between compartments. The results are longer-lasting fresh food and fewer foods with freezer burn, as well as increased energy efficiency.

Refrigerator designers also continue to refine designs to keep cooks happy. Maytag's "wide by side" offers a side freezer with wide enough shelves to hold frozen pizzas; popular "bottom-mount" refrigerators have freezers located on the bottom of the appliance so owners can access their fresh food without having to bend over.

On the highest end of the technology scale, LG Electronics' Internet Digital DIOS Refrigerator features an LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) screen that allows owners to surf the Internet, download recipes, record video messages, send e-mails, listen to music, watch TV and create digital photo albums, among other tasks. The research team that developed the

refrigerator submitted a total of 75 patents revolving around its innovative operations. While the Tri-County hh Gregg has yet to sell one—at \$7,999, the refrigerator requires plenty of cool cash—it's floor model gets plenty of attention from shoppers of all ages. LGE, a Korean company established in 1958 and popular in Europe and Asia, sees its technological prowess as one of its strongest selling points. "[LGE] pays attention to all the little details," says Kauffman, whose stores have carried the manufacturer for about a year.

While some retailers and designers dismiss Internet-ready appliances as impractical and too complicated for their clients, others, like Kauffman, maintain that it won't be long before the term "network" in homes refers to more than just personal computers and television stations.

Cooks and non-cooks alike enjoy the enhanced functions of the new electric cooktops. "You can do things [with electric cooktops] that were only possible on the best of gas settings," explains Bill Zetterberg, owner and president of Angert's Appliances in College Hill. Whether they use steady, low pulses of electricity or specially designed burners, electric cooktops offer versatility to cooks. "You can leave Nestle Toll House morsels on [the cooktop] all day and they'll stay perfectly melted."

Thermador and KitchenAid also produce high-performing, smooth electric models that

even appeal to diehard gas-loving cooks. "Thermador has come out with an electric cooktop that actually sizes the pan—you tell it the size of the pan and it senses how many coils to turn on," Zetterberg says. "You're getting maximum coverage; you're getting maximum performance." The benefits stretch beyond performance to easy cleaning—no knobs or grates to work around—and improved energy efficiency.

Still, gas cooktops remain high on most gourmets' wish lists, and Kemper Design Center's Rose says that some extensive kitchen remodels begin with one simple end goal: running a gas line into the cooking area. The dual fuel ranges preferred by many home chefs allow for the best of both worlds—gas burners and electric convection baking.

After decades on the market, convection ovens—which incorporate fans as well as heating elements to circulate heat throughout the oven and cook food more quickly and evenly—continue to be refined and upgraded. Already popular because of the speed at which they cook dishes (about 25 percent faster than conventional, or thermal, ovens) and their efficiency (consider baking three sheets of perfectly browned cookies at one time), today's models fulfill busy bakers' dreams. For instance, the Whirlpool AccuBake Duo promises to cook a turkey, cherry pie and a pan of rolls simultaneously using specially designed temper-

ature controls. Wolf's dual convection system, which includes two fans and four heating elements, tops standard convection's cook speed and evenness, says Zetterberg. "You virtually eliminate any hot and cool spots in your oven. You lose less of your moisture to evaporation."

Another new convenient touch "hides" the oven floor's coiled cooking element beneath a solid, easy-to-clean and usable surface. "You can put bake stones and even a turkey roasting pan there," Zetterberg says.

Perhaps the most talked-about, if not most widely available, addition to the market is Whirlpool's Polara Refrigerated Range, a stand-alone oven that can refrigerate food before cooking it. The pricey appliance keeps pre-made meals cool all day, then begins to cook them at a pre-determined time. The finished product, perfectly prepared, waits until cooks arrive home at the end of the day. Polara even includes a feature that begins to cool the food after it's cooked if, say, a late meeting or soccer practice delays the family's arrival. When the dish is finished, the oven switches to warming mode, then to cooling mode after another set period of time—depending on the dish. Other high-tech ovens not only cook food faster and better, they double as microwaves. General Electric's Profile Advantium 120 oven offers traditional microwave capabilities, a warming mode and a setting called Speedcook, which



PHOTO COURTESY OF LGE



cooks food up to four times faster than conventional ovens. The Advantium line, which includes a built-in model, requires 220 wiring, which makes it a more popular choice for owners building new homes or planning major kitchen renovations. Whirlpool's entry into the microwave/oven category, the new g2microwave SpeedCook Appliance, features a non-stick interior coating that's touted as an industry first.

Gourmet-worthy Functions

Locally, new kitchens often incorporate warming drawers and design touches of stainless steel, but more haute cuisine-minded homeowners line their walls with equipment once reserved for fine restaurant kitchens. Designers understand that for top-of-the-line customers, image matters as much as performance. "Half of the people who buy the professional-grade [appliances]... I'm not sure if they cook," says Ginny Richter, showroom manager of Custom Distributors, a builder supplier in Tri-County. "They want it because they can [afford it]."

Kitchen costs can skyrocket as homeowners coordinate high-end accoutrements—some more necessary than others—that complete the professional look. Kitchens that incorporate



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CHEF'S CHOICE:

Upscale lines like Germany's Gaggenau feature items like the CombiSteam oven (above) and an Asian wok station (lower right).



professional-quality cooktops and ovens, for example, require more than just cleaning and maintenance, says Rose. High-performance cooktops and ranges, especially gas-operated appliances, need high-performance oven hoods not only to eliminate combustion by-products but to maintain safety and ventilate the room. "[Oven] hoods are almost an industry of their own," she says. "Because of these high-perfor-

mance ranges, you can't just have a noisy light on top of your cook surface anymore. You have to have something that works."

To find specific options to meet their needs, shoppers also look overseas, to foreign manufacturers of specialized appliances. From Germany, Gaggenau, a line carried locally at Custom Distributors and The Appliance Loft, offers the industry's most high-tech oven hood. The AH 600 features halogen lamps and uses a type of technology to eliminate all cooking odors by creating a front-end air stream to pull odors into a special filter.

Gaggenau also tempts connoisseurs with its CombiSteam oven, a wide, built-in model that opens from the side, not the top, and gives cooks precise control of dry and wet heat. Chefs who can afford the luxury taste their rewards in juicier meats and fish, brown but moist poultry and perfectly cooked vegetables. At Angert's, the city's oldest appliance store, Zetterberg sees shoppers in search of specific high-end additions for their kitchens, such as

wine refrigerators. The Marvel line features deluxe "wine grottos," which can include a Humidrawer, a humidifier that stores up to 200 cigars in a controlled environment. For discerning customers who find using a standard refrigerator for wine unacceptable, Sub-Zero offers a unit with two distinct cooling areas, each featuring adjustable climates. "You can separate your reds and whites and store them at temperatures specifically designed for them," says Zetterberg.

Besides technological innovations, kitchens continue to grow to accommodate the expanding needs—and wants—of families. These larger spaces allow for multiple cooks and multiple room uses, which translates into basic changes in kitchen design. "You need secondary sinks and an extra refrigerator someplace so that you don't need roller skates to cook," explains Rose.

"One [oven] is just not enough anymore," agrees Richter. "You sometimes wonder where it will stop."



Futuristic Cleaning Capacities

Because time spent cleaning takes away from life's more glamorous pursuits, technological advances that help homeowners take care of everything from cleaning dishes to caring for fine fabrics attract more than gadget-lovers.

Better insulation and improved efficiency make noisy dishwashers of the past nothing more than a loud memory. As with other kitchen appliances, new dishwasher models offer a tremendous amount of variety. The New Zealand company Fisher & Paykel's drawer dishwashers—easy-to-access models that are about half the size of standard dishwashers—continue to gain devotees among customers who want the flexibility of running smaller loads and cleaning different types of dishes simultaneously. Angert's Zetterberg owns a set. "It's so energy efficient it costs less than a quarter a load," he says.

Fisher & Paykel first developed the tech-

nology for separate dishwasher drawers, which can be stacked or individually placed in strategic locations, for users in wheelchairs.

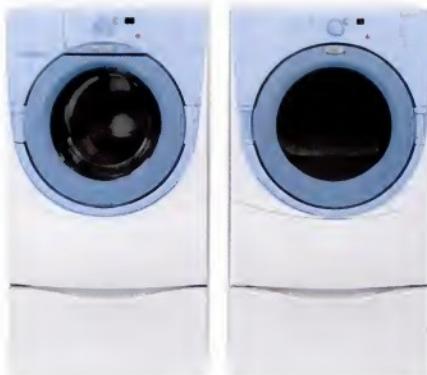
KitchenAid's briva in-sink dishwasher, a new entry into the dishwasher market that looks like the covered half of a double sink, loads from the top and includes a removable cutting board. It can hold up to five place settings, and wash them quickly and quietly.

For a complete system of laundry care in the home, the Whirlpool Family Studio creates more than a new look for washers and dryers. The line includes a variety of deluxe products, such as the DryAire Drying Cabinet, which looks like a closet and circulates warm air to dry items quicker than a clothesline. The items may be hung or laid flat. The Personal Valet Clothes Vitalizing System, designed to replace most trips to the dry cleaner, smoothes wrinkles and cleans odors in less than an hour—it's safe for nearly every fabric, including items with beads, sequins, leather and suede.

OOO

FULLY LOADED:

Whirlpool's Family Studio for laundry highlights the innovative Personal Valet (left) and the streamlined Duet washer and dryer (below).



Whirlpool's Duet front load washers and dryers, currently the most popular appliances of the "Family Studio" line, combine modern design with more immediate laundry benefits unique to front-load models.

"Front load washers are becoming the norm rather than the exception," says Zetterberg, who adds that the style dominates the European market. "People love them and they work well." Because the water flows through them instead of agitating around them, the design results in less water use and less wear and tear on clothes, which means fewer loads and more energy efficiency. "They pay for themselves in the long run," Zetterberg maintains.

Efficiency rises to new levels in the LGE Internet ready washer—not yet available locally—with operations that led to 107 patents by 30 researchers. Among other perks, the laundry cleaner taps into online research to help determine proper cleaning processes for specific stains. *[Continued on page 108]*

Once vast farmland and the route to bargains, today's arrows in Warren County point to million dollar homes, high-profile golf and burgeoning communities.

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BY ELISSA SONNENBERG

Following the Arrows



Paul and Becky Hogya fell in love at last year's HOMEARAMA®.

The couple, married for 13 years, felt an instant attraction to Chateau Rothschild, a 7,200-square-foot, \$1.1 million home featured on the 2002 tour.

Once they'd seen the house, they knew they were ready to make a commitment—and a move to Vista Pointe at River's Bend, the luxury home development in South Lebanon, that this month hosts HOMEARAMA® for the second year in a row.

The couple, originally from the Cleveland area, had been eyeing new homes under construction around the River's Bend Tournament Players Club Golf Course, located across State Route 48 from the Vista Pointe residential development. But Becky wasn't sure she wanted to leave their house in Montgomery. "When Paul first saw that they were building the [River's Bend] course here, I thought it was too far away," she explains. But friends who lived nearby convinced her to reconsider. After living in the area for nearly a year, Becky's perspective has changed. "It's not as far out in the country as I thought."

Changing Faces in South Lebanon

Not so long ago, "country" aptly described South Lebanon. Settled in 1795, the oldest community in Warren County remained mostly quiet, and mostly farm land, until the last decade.



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AT THE FOREFRONT: Well-manicured greens and precisely measured bunkers help frame the quality of life for residents in Warren County's River's Bend, one of the area's most successful developments.

In fact, the village was best known in the 1970s and 1980s not because of upscale housing, but because of memorable commercials for its highest profile business, a discount appliance and furniture store called Kash's Big Bargain Barn, where shoppers could "save cash with Kash."

"Who would have thought that I'd be buying land and putting million-dollar homes in South Lebanon, home of Kash Amburgey?" asks Bill Hines, president of Rivers Bend Land Company Ltd., the business responsible for developing both River's Bend and Vista Pointe at River's Bend. Amburgey, a fiery preacher turned salesman, put the village on the map with energetic pleas for bargain shoppers to leave the city behind and "follow the arrows, follow the cars to Kash's Big Bargain Barn in South Lebanon, Ohio."

Today, the arrows guiding visitors to the village lead to construction sites for golf-course community homes, and most notably, to HOMEARAMA®, where for the first time ever, all homes will sell for more than \$1 million.

South Lebanon's mayor, James D. Smith, explains that the recent growth stems from a combination of easy access to highways, the highly ranked Kings Local School District, choice land for new housing and aggressive annexation. "Our population is growing at an average of 10 percent a year [and will continue] for the next five years," Smith says. "We've tripled in size in the last 10 years."

With 2,000 new homes under construction in five different developments, South Lebanon, with a current population of about 3,000, continues to draw new residents to Warren County. One of the state's fastest growing counties, Warren encompasses other fast-growing municipalities and townships, including Mason, Maineville, Hamilton Township and Deerfield Township.

Recent development in Warren County has capitalized on the region's strengths, which include small local governments, lush natural surroundings and high-profile recreational outlets, such as Paramount's Kings Island and the River's Bend golf course—the only PGA TOUR golf course in the state. The area also retains a strength from its past. "It's still a hometown atmosphere," Smith says.

"People know each other, people know their neighbors," agrees Mike Kilburn, one of Warren County's three commissioners.

"People who don't live here envy the lifestyle we have. That's a wonderful reflection of everything we're doing."

Rapid growth brings benefits—like a higher profile and increased income from earnings taxes—but also challenges. Kilburn recognizes the double-edged sword of such popularity. "It's like being the best pie maker in the world," he says. "Everyone wants them, but if you don't have a way of regenerating your supply, someday you're not going to have any to eat for yourself." Kilburn's biggest concern these days involves responsible growth, which he says includes careful management of the county's remaining undeveloped acres.

Qualities of Life

When Bill Hines and his company associates first began piecing together property to create the master-planned community of River's Bend, they understood the intrinsic value of the rolling hills and thickly wooded areas of Hamilton Township and South Lebanon.

With approximately 500 acres of land to create River's Bend in Hamilton Township, and a little over 100 acres to plot Vista Pointe at River's Bend across the street in South Lebanon, designers kept their focus on the land. "We had zoning for 1,200 units of housing [at River's Bend]," explains Hines. Instead of densely populating the area, his group chose to plot space for less than 300 River's Bend homes, and to partner with the PGA TOUR and golf legend Arnold Palmer to create a 220-acre, tournament-quality, private golf course on the site. The developers also designated 50 acres of River's Bend as an Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) easement. None of the ODNR land, on hillsides leading to the Little Miami River and its scenic bike trail, can be touched by builders or property owners. "There's a balance," Hines explains.

Hines calls the results of their nature- and golf-friendly planning "phenomenal"—224 of 248 plots at River's Bend sold within three years and 58 of 81 plots at Vista Pointe sold within 15 months, exceeding all expectations. "A lot of [residents] want to be part of the first-class golf experience," says Hines. "The rest love the environment. It's beautiful just to drive down the streets."

With the prestige of the private golf course and club, a new Sportsplex with indoor and

outdoor exercise and sports facilities and a growing number of luxury homes, the development's appeal reaches far beyond its \$6.5 million clubhouse. "It's almost like you are living in a resort in Cincinnati and you don't have to go anywhere," Hines says. "That's been the attraction for the majority of people."

The professional quality golf course, which hosts the Kroger Classic tournament again this year, also adds a unique layer of security to homeowners' investments. "This is pretty well-protected real estate," Hines says.

New Homes, New Lives

As one of the first families to move into Vista Pointe, the Hogyas look forward exploring all their growing community has to offer—from the Little Miami Scenic Bike Trail to golf lessons for their two young daughters.

And because of the limited number of residential lots and the preservation of green space, they know that the area's natural beauty will mature along with their family. "River's Bend already looks like it's been here 30 to 50 years," says developer Hines. In five years, he predicts, "it won't look much different than it does now."

Likely changes, the Hogyas believe, will be more personal, as residents find new ways to connect with each other. They cite one unique example of how they're gaining a stronger sense of their own community. One River's Bend homeowner distributes a directory with residents' names, addresses and phone numbers as well as children's birthdays and names of neighborhood resources for babysitting, house sitting and pet sitting. Through the directory, the Hogyas have found a sitter their daughters adore as well as common bonds with their neighbors.

"Everyone is pretty much in the same boat and looking forward to developing a good community," explains Becky, who is learning to golf, but enjoys visiting the River's Bend course's clubhouse for lunches and social nights. "Most people are open to developing new relationships."

"You don't feel at all like an outsider," adds her husband Paul. A doctor and avid golfer, he's anxious to share his love of the sport, and his appreciation for fine living, with his family in their Vista Pointe home for years to come. "I see it getting better and better as time goes by."

Going for the Green

Students at Kings Junior High in Kings Mills know a thing or two about birdies. Though their lessons took place in art class, not on fairways, their colorful work now reminds golfers at the PGA TOUR Tournament Players Club (TPC) at River's Bend of important links humans share—with nature.

The students decorated about a dozen birdhouses where winged species now make comfortable homes, some visible behind fences on the award-winning golf course's 11th and 12th holes, according to Norbert O'Hare, River's Bend's landscape foreman. "We have a nice bluebird population where the birdhouses are hung," he says.

The birdhouse project, an outreach effort and part of the golf course's work as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary, shows that for course staff, the ultimate golf experience includes more than perfectly manicured greens. "Golf courses are very significant green spaces and wildlife habitats," says O'Hare, who adds that only two other courses in the state—and 300 worldwide—have been certified by the well-known conservation group.

While River's Bend club members appreciate bluebirds, foxes and snapping turtles between swings, their primary interest lies along the 7,196 yards and 18 holes of the course's 220 acres. This year River's Bend, designed by Arnold Palmer's golf course design company, was chosen as "Club Operation of the Year" among 25 PGA TOUR clubs in the country and also hosts the Kroger Classic. Members here can

also play at other tournament-grade clubs around the country, from Sugarloaf in Atlanta to The Canyons in Las Vegas.

The "TPC lifestyle," touted by staff and club members, stems from course management's close attention to details, from golf course specifications to vocabulary. For instance, since the course must meet professional tour standards, a high-tech air circulation system under each green ensures that no matter the weather, grass roots stay fresh and moist. In other words, no "baked greens." And TPCs espouse their own terminology—sand traps are "bunkers," golf carts are "golf cars" and the unique driving range is a "practice facility," explains Tom Jones, director of marketing.

Named by *Golf Digest* as one of the top 10 new private golf courses in the country last year, River's Bend, where players first teed off in June 2001, continues to attract new individual and corporate members. "We had the best opening of any TPC facility in the history of the [PGA] TOUR," says Jones. After two years, the club has approximately 275 members, ranging in age from 28 to 88. The course acts as a major draw for local homebuyers as well. Though nationally, an average of 26 percent of golf course community residents actually join the nearest clubs, 70 percent of River's Bend homeowners have invested in the TPC, says Jones.

Still, not all River's Bend amenities revolve around golf, or even birds and foxes. The club offers social memberships

for non-golfers who enjoy weekend sock hops, movie nights for kids and other events. Members enjoy a menu developed by executive chef Sean Kagy, who left his four-star home at The Palace Restaurant at the Cincinnati Hotel downtown to join the club. At the clubhouse, Kagy designs vintner and brewmaster dinners and offers themed cooking classes.

Luxurious extras aside, River's Bend's association with the PGA TOUR results in benefits for local charitable organizations as well. The tour's part-ownership in the club helps offset its event costs, which not only increases prize money and enhances the field of players, it ensures that more tournament money can be earmarked for worthy causes.

Since River's Bend opened, its operations have helped raise college scholarship money through the Kroger Classic. In addition, golf outings and fund-raisers held on Mondays, when the course is closed to members, have raised more than \$1 million for other local non-profit organizations, including Special Olympics and the Anthony Munoz Foundation.

Whether they are attracted by the formality of the game, the beauty of the surroundings or the comprehensive PGA TOUR mission, Jones says that members share an appreciation for the complete package. "People come out and they fall in love with this," he says. "We have people who enjoy golf and enjoy life."

—Elissa Sonnenberg



Whatever the style of a HOMEARAMA® home, you can bet the interior and exterior will be party-friendly.

ooo

BY ALISON BOUR

That's Entertainment



Let's face it. No one likes to throw an average dinner party. No host or hostess wants guests to leave politely saying, "We had a nice time" or "You have a lovely home."

Those who believe entertaining should be elevated to an art form want only one thing on their guests' minds when they leave.

"Wow!"

Fortunately, HOMEARAMA® designers and builders understand and are constantly coming up with new ideas to create spaces that make entertaining easy, elegant, fun—and memorable. Whether it's indoors or outside, upstairs or on the lower level, formal or casual—there are plenty of ways to leave guests wanting more, from hearth rooms with giant fireplaces to billiard rooms with adjoining bars, from walk-in wine cellars to a complete outdoor kitchen on a beautiful terrace.



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From floor-to-ceiling windows to sumptuous furnishings, sleek open kitchens to state-of-the-art entertainment centers, HOMEARAMA® living spaces give owners and guests plenty to talk about.

There's (Still) No Place Like Home

An evening of ballet is terrific. So is the theater. Even dinner and a film can be the ticket. But, lately, homeowners are really staying closer to the hearth, entertaining their guests in the place they know best: their home.

"People are entertaining more," says David Millett, owner of David A. Millett, Inc. in Symmes Township and the interior designer for Grandstone Manor, the 2003 HOMEARAMA® home built by Rookwood Construction and Development, LLC. "They desire versatility. People are putting more into their homes."

In other words, the high-end home fronts become fantasylands, of sorts, places where the media rooms keep getting more high-tech and the wine cellars larger and more elaborate.

Pardon Me, June Cleaver

Let's face it. No matter what you do to entice guests to meander about your home, they always seem to end up in the same spot. The kitchen.

"It will always be the hearth of the home, the center," says Karen Biesczak, owner of Bzak Design Group in Terrace Park. No matter the culture or country, Biesczak says, people love to gather in the kitchen.

So, instead of fighting it, a unique enter-

taining space can be made right alongside the cooking area. In some cases, homeowners have eliminated—or at least decreased—some square footage in more formal living or dining rooms to make more space for the kitchen.

Upholstered seating areas in a variety of heights offer areas for intimate conversations yet keep traffic moving smoothly, Biesczak explains. A variety of lighting options should be considered—brighter task lights for cooking and lamps or recessed lights for relaxing. According to Millett, a double island provides extra space for mingling during an event. Bar stools can be pulled up to one island so that a single host can prep the meal and the other can visit with guests at the same time. "The two aren't falling over each other and still they are both facing into the experience," says Millett.

When creating seating arrangements, Biesczak suggests making certain that guests can move comfortably. As a rule, each pull-out chair should have three feet of clearance behind it.

Since guests are going to congregate in the kitchen, a color palette of inviting, warm shades will bring the space to life. Marymac Schooley, a designer with Kemper Design Center near Sharonville, especially likes shades of light yellow, green, tan, beige, brown and even tones of red. "The big thing this year has also been metal accents," she says.

Along with warm colors, homeowners are opting for larger windows and walls of windows to create a connection with the outdoors and further enhance the space.

Some Like it Hot

For those who love to cook and entertain, plenty of specialty items can be designed into the kitchen cooking space, especially when choosing a professional-grade range. An authentic Asian wok station is one of the most unique. Biesczak says the station can offer up to 25,000 BTUs for fast searing and restaurant-style cuisine. Most professional ranges allow for two people to work together and include

The kitchen.

**"It will always be the hearth
of the home, the center."**



ooo

TAKE THE HEAT:

Modern kitchens give homeowners room to cook and mingle with guests. They also feature more professional-grade appliances than ever before.

grills and griddles. Other specialty options include in-counter steamers and pasta pots. Deep fryers can also be built right into the counter space. And a pot-fill faucet located next to the range is a must-have for convenience.

The new microwave/convection combination ovens, along with secondary ovens, also come in handy for entertaining. Depending on your particular style, an additional oven or microwave could be placed in another location for heavy duty baking or simply to heat hors d'oeuvres. "Warming drawers are becoming well known," adds Biesczak. "They're ideal when placed just below the counter and can be pulled out."

It's also a good idea to install a second refrigerator in a separate location. The newest refrigerator units—with specially designed drawers—make entertaining even easier since they can be placed in the kitchen and perhaps, in the hearth room for beverages, allowing guests to serve themselves.

A Place for Everything

If kitchens are getting bigger, so are pantries, according to Patti May, managing member of Ireland-May Ltd. in Montgomery. Generally, homeowners prefer two—one for food storage and a butler pantry for dinnerware, glasses, service pieces and other items. Even though it is still popular to display china in the formal dining room, most people now prefer additional storage options somewhere near the entertaining areas.

Jack L. Brandenburg, II, president of Brandenburg Construction, LLC and Brandenburg Development Company in Loveland, once built a china closet off the kitchen in a back hallway that led to the garage. "It was out of sight and mind but still convenient."

Now that the laundry area is often built on the second floor, that space, which is usually adjacent to the kitchen, can be transformed into unique, custom storage spaces, he says.

Tear Down Those Walls

What happened to a quiet dinner in the formal dining room followed by a nightcap in the traditional (and often stately) living room?

It's not as popular, says May. Most homeowners still want living and dining areas, but "they don't just want a box," she explains. Rather, these small [Continued on page 116]

Break Out of Your Entertaining Rut



Should you seat an artist next to a civil engineer at a dinner party?

Absolutely, says Anne Lisbin, co-owner of Elegant Fare in the Cincinnati Museum Center. People with varied occupations are more likely to keep conversations interesting and flowing at either a formal or informal event. "You also need to split up the host and hostess and put them at different tables," she adds.

Dinner tables should always include both introverts and extroverts, and Lisbin isn't afraid to pull out the ice breakers to liven up an event. Sing-a-longs can be used, especially at holidays with each table taking a verse. Charades can get a slower party moving again.

One especially popular plan is to have guests switch tables after dinner so they share dessert with a whole new group of people.

"The magic number for home parties seems to be between 40 and 100," says Debbie Richter, sales and marketing manager for Chef's Choice Catering in Blue Ash.

She summarizes the three most important parts of a successful event: Food, entertainment and decorations. "What they remember," says Richter, "is the food, how much fun they had and was it pretty?"

These days, Richter plans about half of her events as formal parties and the other half as informal gatherings. She suggests winter as a good time to host a more formal event. "People want to get out and it's more fun then to dress up."

The best way to pull together all the components of entertaining—especially when a theme is involved—is through decorations, according to Richter. Ice carvings, related props and table décor are essential items while roving musicians, strolling magicians and even palm readers are popular additions to parties these days.

Lisbin also suggests planning a variety of dishes. "If you don't know everybody, you have to have vegetarian items and other items that will appeal to everybody, she says. However, dinner doesn't have to be exotic to impress. Simple meals are just as appealing.

Richter agrees. A main course of tenderloin or oriental flank steak works well. Other popular ideas include a pasta bar complete with a chef who tosses a guest's personal choices, a bruschetta buffet that offers a variety of toppings and a dessert bar.

"Most people cook way too much food," says Lisbin. If two entrées are offered plus other options, most will take smaller portions of a few choices.

To pull it off without a hitch, plan early. Prepare as much ahead of time as possible. Other tips include:

- * Choose dishes with less prep time so they can be assembled the day of the event.
- * Set the table or organize service items the night before.
- * Defrost some steaks that can be quickly grilled in case something unforeseen happens.
- * Suggest that guests help prepare appetizers; they actually enjoy it.

And, above all, says Lisbin, have fun! All too often homeowners are caught up in trying to plan a perfect evening that they end up having a terrible time. "That will often happen—the host is not part of the party."

—Alison Bour



Play Mates

FORGET CARDBOARD BOXES. MODERN PLAYHOUSES
MAKE KIDS FEEL RIGHT AT HOME.

■ BY ELISSA SONNENBERG

When Beth Hellman was a little girl, she loved riding her tricycle in circles around her playhouse. The house's cardboard walls and roof fueled her imagination as she played in her family's basement and dreamed of a home of her own.

Now 44, the Indian Hill homemaker knows first-hand just how much playhouses have changed since her childhood. While cardboard houses still exist, and some kids will always enjoy transforming empty appliance boxes into castles, kid-sized replicas of "grown-up" homes typify a new generation of carefully designed and constructed playhouses. These mini-masterpieces include everything from tongue-and-groove plywood floors to asphalt roof shingles guaranteed to last at least 25 years.

Six years ago, Hellman chose a two-story, Victorian-style playhouse for her two young daughters—Anna, now 9, and Emily, 7. "It looks like a little cottage in the woods," says Hellman, who admits with a laugh, "I think I bought it for me when [Anna] was about two."

The pale yellow house has a purple wooden door and teal shutters that match the color of its window boxes. A fake chimney adds to its realistic look, as does a mailbox and brass street numbers that share the address of the family's residence. "It's kind of like a home away from home," Hellman says.

This year, young HOMEARAMA® visitors can discover the pleasures that Hellman's daughters enjoy when they tour the first-ever KIDDIERAMA, a showcase of playhouses on the grounds of the annual home show. The Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati's first fund-raising effort for the Council on Child Abuse of Southern Ohio, Inc., KIDDIERAMA features play structures designed and donated by local builders.

The builders involved look forward to KIDDIERAMA as a chance to support a worthy cause and flex some creative muscle with one-of-a-kind entries. The six builders will try to out-do one another with painstaking attention to detail on their miniature luxury homes. The Drees



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Company, for example, plans to make their playhouse—a Victorian-style painted lady—serve as a bright and cheerful historical tribute. "We're doing a house that evokes the shape and form of the original home built by Theodore Drees in 1928," says Scott Finfrock, Drees' design manager for midwest and premier region's architecture department.

Building blocks

Elaborate and expensive new playhouses begin construction with durable—and familiar—materials. "There are a lot of elements [in playhouses] that are comparable to what you would find in a conventional home," says Pete DeLois, owner of Playhouses USA and Recreations Outlet, which has showrooms in Mariemont, Montgomery and Columbus.

He sells a variety of playhouse styles, including a lighthouse, each constructed by Amish carpenters who use supplies such as white pine log siding, German lap board siding, double-paned glass or plexi-glass windows, architectural or cedar shake shingles and plywood walls and floors.

The popular Yukon model, which resembles a rustic log cabin with a covered front porch and an optional porch swing, features glass windows with screens. While the Nantucket playhouse includes a child's Dutch front door and a decorative chimney, a cupola and tilt-out windows make the Potomac Bungalow unique. Playhouse models can also be outfitted with deluxe options—heaters, air conditioners and even video monitoring systems. "We can do a lot of variations," adds DeLois, who plans to donate a Nantucket model to KID-DIERAMA. (Robert Lucke Homes will add finishing touches to the playhouse.)

Two years ago, DeLois shipped a "tricked-out" playhouse, valued at more than \$20,000, to the King of Morocco. The king's playhouse, called the Napa, comes standard with indoor and outdoor lighting, custom interior paint, window curtains, throw cushions and an upholstered loveseat, not to mention a puppet theater, glow-in-the-dark stars on the loft ceiling and wiring for an Internet hookup. "Not only did he have us ship the house over, he paid to send one of our employees to assemble it," says DeLois.

Angela C. Santomero, the co-creator of Nickelodeon's "Blue's Clues," was another high-profile custom job for DeLois. "She wanted to turn a closet in her [Manhattan]

Helping Hands



COUNCIL ON CHILD ABUSE
OF SOUTHERN OHIO INC.

When parents leave Cincinnati hospitals with their newborns, they take home a powerful "present" tucked alongside samples of diapers and baby lotion. The "Don't Shake the Baby" packet, a gift from the Council on Child Abuse of Southern Ohio, Inc. (COCA), includes tips on comforting a crying baby, a "Don't Get Rattled" doorhanger that lists the Council's 24-hour parent helpline and a pacifier.

The colorful and practical package exemplifies COCA's ongoing efforts to stop child abuse—in this case Shaken Baby Syndrome, a condition with potentially long-term, or even fatal, results. In 2001, Cincinnati Children's Hospital reported 21 cases of shaken babies, and in the first two months of 2003, nine more tiny patients shared the diagnosis.

Like other COCA projects, the 24,000 hospital packets distributed each year include important information that reinforces a single, essential goal. "Our mission is very simple," explains Kathy Cueto, the COCA's development director. "We prevent child abuse."

This year, the COCA gains a new ally in its efforts. The Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati (HBA) hosts its first ever HOMEARAMA® KIDDIERAMA, a showcase of playhouses on the grounds of its annual showcase of luxury homes, says Elda Marshall, HBA's executive director. (See the information box on page 71 for details.)

Proceeds from the sales of the KIDDIERAMA playhouses, all of which will be donated by local builders, will benefit the non-profit COCA, a United Way agency. When the organization asked the home builders to consider the fund-raiser, it didn't take Marshall and her peers long to make a decision. "We care about our community and abused children," Marshall says.

Child abuse, Cueto adds, impacts the well-being of thousands of local children and touches many more lives than most people realize. In 2001, Hamilton County recorded more than 10,000 reports of abuse.

The sheer volume of abuse cases creates a major obstacle to protecting children. "Case workers are so overwhelmed they

can't possibly keep track," Cueto says. So the COCA focuses its work on stopping abuse before it starts—a job with a success rate that's difficult to track because, as Cueto explains, "prevention has no face."

The often unrecognized face of child abuse can appear in any kind of neighborhood and injure any age of child, Cueto says. Its complexity poses challenges that COCA staff knows well, and its prevention involves more than recognizing symptoms. "We give [caregivers] a plan," says Cueto, who has worked with the COCA for 13 of its 25 years.

Providing information about child abuse where and when it's needed creates busy schedules for the organization's staff, which includes six full-time and six part-time employees. When they aren't training hospital personnel to teach healthy parenting skills, they're teaching children, parents, teachers and others who come in contact with young people.

In schools, the COCA's programs address physical, verbal and sexual abuse, as well as peer abuse and bullying, she says. Before staff members lead workshops for students about these sensitive topics, they talk with teachers about the issues and conduct parent workshops. "We're there solely to help parents learn how to be better parents and to help kids learn to protect themselves," says Cueto. Last year, the COCA reached 16,000 community members through school-based work alone.

The COCA's projects also extend beyond school classrooms and hospital obstetric wards. The COCA-sponsored 24-hour parent helpline—(513) 961-8004—offers caregivers around-the-clock support, whether callers need a referral to a social service agency, a friendly piece of advice or just someone to listen to their concerns and fears. Still another COCA program links speakers who can spread the organization's message of awareness and prevention to businesses and community groups.

By targeting not only parents and children, but also the professionals who work with them, COCA's efforts create an empowering ripple effect. The approach, born out of the necessity of a small, hands-on office, allows their dozen staff members to share critical information about children's health and safety with tens of thousands of community members every year.

"We're small," Cueto explains, "but mighty."

For more information about COCA, visit their web site, www.cocachild.org.

—Elissa Sonnenberg



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apartment into a playhouse," he explains. The long-distance design project culminated in a trip to New York City for several of DeLois' carpenters, who completed the job on site.

But parents don't have to live in a palace or launch a popular television program to be able to afford a handcrafted playhouse. Most house styles are available in different sizes so that they can fit into a variety of yards—and budgets. At Playhouses USA, prices begin at \$1,799 for a Vermont-style cabin. Customers can always forego the polyurethane finish on the plywood floors and other, pricier options. "We sell a lot of them unfinished," says DeLois. "People do creative things with them."

While one family may choose to outfit a small log cabin-style house with camp-related artwork for its children, another may create an ornate "painted lady" getaway. Some owners also make playhouses seem more realistic by furnishing them with proportionately sized appliances and home accessories made of wood, or in the Hellman's case, plastic. Anna and

Emily's house includes a kitchen set, ironing board, washing machine, and a dining room table and chairs for entertaining.

No matter the model or level of detail, DeLois advises playhouse owners to protect their investments by paying attention to minimal, but essential, maintenance. For example, owners should check all hinges regularly and make sure wood remains painted or treated so that it won't rot.

More than kids' stuff

As much as playhouses revolve around the play habits of children, the adults in their lives typically make the initial decisions about the style and extent of extra features. "Part of it is influenced by the parents," DeLois explains. "They are the ones writing the check."

Yet children aren't the only beneficiaries of modern playhouse design. DeLois has accommodated customers with more eccentric playhouse demands, including one who purchased several models, one for her pet monkeys. An-

other woman who saw his playhouses at a garden show in Newport, R.I., bought a playhouse specifically for show chickens.

No matter their original purposes, playhouses can, and should, serve a multitude of purposes, according to DeLois. "When children grow out of it, you can use it as storage." Every playhouse he sells includes an adult-sized door on one side to give grown-ups easy access to more than children's tea parties.

"It is multi-functional," Hellman agrees. Her daughters' playhouse serves as winter storage space when the weather turns too cold for outdoor play. She moves her daughters' plastic furniture into the basement and their Victorian becomes an unlikely looking tool shed until spring arrives. "My husband stores his riding lawn mower in it," she explains.

Dream houses

As the Hellmans have learned, one of the most attractive benefits of a playhouse has nothing to do its custom paint or potential for

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electrical wiring. The value of a playhouse, they say, relates directly to the amount of control a child has over it.

"It's their house," says Hellman, who allows her girls free reign in their playhouse, as long as they play safely. The girls have painted the floor, written their names on the door and spilled food, all without a single reprimand. "I want for them to feel like it's a place for them to play and be creative and safe."

At the same time, she appreciates that as her children age, the playhouse will grow with them. While younger children may delight in playing pretend house with their parents, pre-teens often retreat to the privacy of a quiet loft space.

Hellman's daughters, for example, first focused on their mother as an ever-present party guest, serving her variations on real and make-believe cookies and cake. Then they began inviting friends to their private space—girls liked joining them for tea and lemonade; boys preferred jumping in and out of windows. This

KIDDIERAMA at HOMEARAMA*



What: A tour of custom-built playhouses constructed and donated by local builders. Children can visit houses with their parents and even vote on their favorites. At the end of the home show, four playhouses will be sold at auction and two awarded as raffle prizes.

When: Playhouses open during HOMEARAMA® hours, June 14-28.

Special VIP carnival-style party, auction and raffle Saturday, June 28.

Where: The grounds of HOMEARAMA®, Vista Pointe at River's Bend, South Lebanon

Why: All proceeds benefit the Council on Child Abuse of Southern Ohio, Inc., in the Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati's first fund-raiser for the non-profit organization.

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Play it Safe

While playhouses nurture youthful imaginations, they also need to protect growing minds—and bodies—from injury. Since there are no state or federal laws that regulate playhouse construction, responsible builders urge parents and caregivers to pay attention to details about everything from structural measurements to building materials.

When shopping for a playhouse, important areas to consider include:

- * **Guardrails.** All elevated surfaces, including playhouse loft spaces, should include guardrails to prevent falls. Look for handrails on ladders, too.
- * **Slats.** Openings in loft space guardrails and between ladder rungs should follow the Consumer Product Safety Commission's guidelines for bunk beds. Openings or slats should be less than 3.5 inches so children can't become trapped between them.
- * **Edges.** All edges should be smooth—watch out for sharp points, exposed hardware and splinters.
- * **Materials.** Some pressure-treated wood may expose children to carcinogens or toxic chemicals like arsenic. Preserved wood can be sanded and sealed with a non-toxic sealant to increase its safety. Look for a high-quality material that won't warp over time or when exposed to harsh weather.
- * **Sizes.** Choose a playhouse size that fits easily in the space available, with room outside for children to play or plant a small garden. Also check the ceiling height—adults need to be able to enter comfortably.

* **Warranties.** Just like conventional homes, playhouse builders should offer at least a one-year warranty to owners.

—Elissa Sonnenberg

summer, the youngest Hellmans are planning a painting party, where they'll transform the playhouse walls into expressions of their own creativity.

As she watches her daughters discover new ways to play in their own special house, Hellman sees that the most important playhouse accessory hasn't changed since she spent rainy summer afternoons on her bike circling a cardboard box and dreaming. "It's a place full of imagination." ■

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If you're serious, there's another question that should come to mind pretty quickly: Can I afford to live in a house like this? And while the financing process can seem daunting, it's actually not that hard to figure out whether you can swing it or not.

There is no one demographic profile of a HOMEARAMA® buyer, says Carol Harris, co-chair of the HOMEARAMA® marketing committee and a Realtor with Comey & Shepherd Realtors. She represents Hensley Homes, which has a house in this year's show, and

has sold other HOMEARAMA® houses in the past. Buyers include families with children, retirees, out-of-towners who are making a lateral move and natives buying their dream home, people who have been looking for a while and those who walk in and decide to buy on an impulse.

"They're kind of all over the place," she says. "You certainly have the person who [sees a HOMEARAMA® house and] says, 'Wow, I have to have this house.' And you have the person who's been meeting with a builder and the builder says, 'I'm doing a HOMEARAMA® home,' and once they see the plans for the home they see there's a lot of value in it."

Impulse buy or not, lenders prefer that you contact them early in the process of home shopping to become pre-qualified for a loan. Pre-qualification is especially important



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Sticker Shock

for high-end homes like those at HOMEARAMA®—some builders require it, and it can give you an advantage if there are other people interested in the same house. The pre-qualification process determines the maximum loan amount you can handle, based on your current financial health.

Lenders use standard guidelines to determine how much a potential homeowner can borrow, says Sandy Robertson, director of sales and marketing at Fifth Third Bank. The borrower's income, assets and credit history all play a role.

Doing the math

So let's take a hypothetical HOMEARAMA® home priced at \$1 million. Fifth Third would expect the homeowner to put down around

A monthly mortgage payment of nearly \$5,000 (or \$57,600 per year) might sound daunting, but that's not the only expense of living in a high-end home. Consider these estimated annual fees on a typical \$1 million HOMEARAMA® home featured in this year's show:

Property taxes: \$15,400

Insurance: \$3,000-\$4,000

Homeowners' association fee: \$780

Sportsplex fees (membership is required for residents): \$900

Golf course dues (membership is optional):

\$6,000 (plus one-time \$29,000 refundable deposit that can be financed with mortgage)

Cleaning every other week (26 weeks):

\$3,900

Landscape maintenance: \$3,800

Information supplied by the Warren County Auditor's Office, Rivers Bend Land Co. Ltd., The Maids and Natorp's, Inc.

\$300,000. Many lenders require 20-25 percent down on a loan of that size. (A typical lender will want to see 15 percent down on loans of up to \$500,000, 20 percent up to \$650,000 and 25 percent up to \$1.1 million.)

"And really, if you don't have 20 percent to put down, you probably shouldn't be buying one of these houses," adds Ed Maynard, vice president of Cox Financial Services downtown.

So with your down payment of \$300,000, you're looking at a loan of \$700,000. Loans of that size are known as jumbo loans and come

at a higher interest rate—about a quarter- to a half-point more—because the lenders are exposing themselves to greater risk by lending so much money. On a 30-year loan, at current interest rates, a loan of \$700,000 at Fifth Third will come with a monthly payment of close to \$3,000. Then add roughly \$1,250 a month in taxes and \$200 in insurance for a total tab of around \$4,500.

The next thing lenders will do is look at the amount of debt you have. Because Fifth Third requires that a borrower pay no more than 28 percent of his or her gross income on housing, a loan that size would require a monthly income of almost \$18,000, or \$216,000 a year. In addition, all the borrower's debt—including car payments, lines of credit, etc.—cannot exceed



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Seminars Help Home Shoppers

36 percent of income, so someone with unusually large debts on top of housing would have to have a higher income.

Fifth Third and other lenders also want to see that the homeowners haven't sunk all their assets into their home. "On a larger loan we're going to want to see two to six months' of mortgage payments in assets even after the down payment," Robertson says. "In this price range that's a rarity when we don't see that that's the case."

These are guidelines rather than hard-and-fast rules, says Robertson, and there is some flexibility built in. For instance, self-employed people—who make up a large segment of the market for high-end housing—often have lower incomes because much of their earnings are write-offs, so lenders will allow that bor-

Learn more about the ins and outs of buying a home—no matter the cost—at home-buying seminars offered by area non-profit organizations. Geared toward first-time buyers, the seminars address down payments, mortgages and other issues.

The Greater Cincinnati Mortgage Counseling Services, 7710 Reading Rd., in Roselawn, runs classes on weekday evenings and some Saturdays. For class dates and registration, call (513) 948-8820.

rower's assets to make up for the lack of sufficient income.

Pondering the investment

By now you probably know whether you'd qualify for a HOMEARAMA® home. But there's another question to ask: If you can afford one, is it a good idea? And is it a good deal?

Frequently it is, says Harris of Comey & Shepherd Realtors. Most builders and suppliers view the show as a marketing tool, so they use their best products and ideas and often don't make

The Home Ownership Center of Greater Cincinnati, located at 2820 Vernon Pl., in Corryville, offers seminars on Wednesday or Thursday evenings. Each session is made up of three classes of three hours each. Call (513) 961-2800 for dates and registration.

The Better Housing League of Greater Cincinnati holds classes Tuesday evenings at the Union Institute, 440 E. McMillan St., in Walnut Hills. A fee of \$20 covers all materials. To register, call (513) 721-6855 or email info@betterhousing.org.

decorated when they buy it. Sometimes they get to keep the window and wall treatments and the landscaping, or if they like most of the furniture, they are allowed to buy it at a reduced price. "It's a showplace when they buy it," Harris says. "For someone who doesn't have the time or desire to decorate, it's always done for them."

But Maynard cautions his clients to think with care before they sink a lot of money into a showplace house. "It's not something you jump into. You have to make a commitment to be there for a long time." ■

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call for entries

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DEADLINE: JUNE 20, 2003

A new competition, cosponsored by *Cincinnati Magazine*, Around the House, WCPO-TV and presented by The Rug Gallery, will honor outstanding and innovative interior design in the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky area.

A jury of distinguished, independent design professionals from the Indianapolis design community will choose award-winning projects based on their overall design excellence, including function and creativity, innovation and design solutions.

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The awards program is open to all interior design professionals practicing in the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky area. There is no limit to the number of projects submitted, however, work must have been completed in the last two years.

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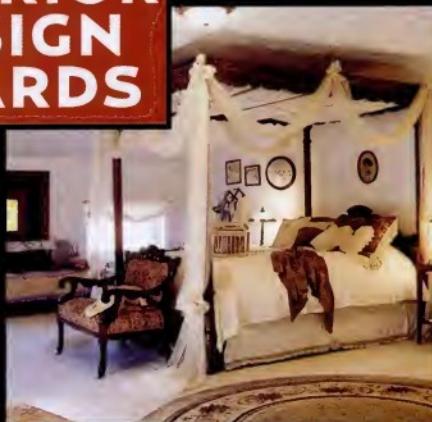
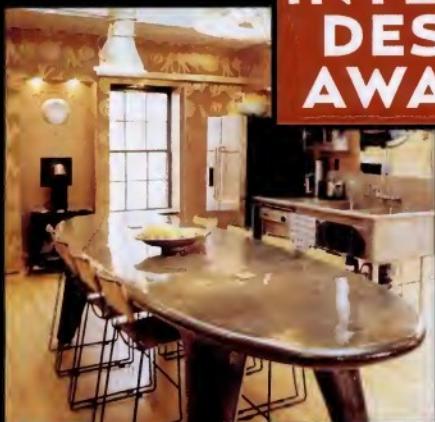
The winners will be announced in the November 2003 issue of *Cincinnati Magazine*. A special awards event will be held in August.

HOW TO ENTER:

Please visit www.cincinnatimagazine.com for official entry forms, regulations, specific categories and general information. All registration information is provided. Call 513-421-4300 for other questions.

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Words of Wisdom

Luxury is what you'll experience in absolutely every home at this year's HOMEARAMA® —Luxury Edition. But how do you define it? And how can you bring luxury into your own home? We turned to local interior designers, many of whom are responsible for choosing almost every item—from carpet to crown molding, from fixtures to furnishings—in HOMEARAMA® homes. We wanted to know what advice these designers might offer on the subject of luxury. Here are responses from designers and others in the field of home design who responded to our questionnaire:

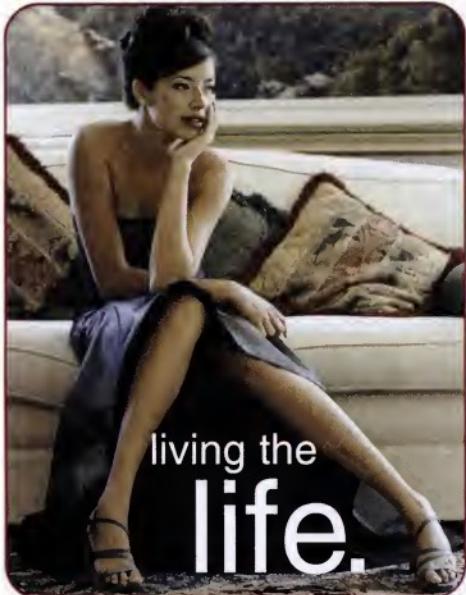
How would you define luxury in a home interior?

"For me, luxury in a home isn't about size or any particular style. Any home can have the feeling of luxury if careful thought is given during the planning stage. It's

the attention to the smallest details that, when repeated over and over again from room to room, imparts the feeling of luxury, of careful consideration that the home wants for nothing. Beautiful furnishings coupled with finely appointed fabrics provide the setting for an ambiance that is lavish not pretentious, sumptuous not imposing." —Nancy Paul, *interior designer, Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell, Montgomery*

"A luxury home interior is one that provides emotional pleasure and physical comfort by utilizing fine details and conveniences." —Christie Crawford, *interior designer, Closson's, Montgomery*

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pens when you use a great number of colors, textures, finishes and styles." —Henry T. Vittetoe III, president, Vittetoe Interior Design, Inc., Taylor Mill

"Luxury is defined differently by each homeowner. Hire an experienced designer and consultant for best results." —Kurt Bietendavel, designer, Valerie Makstall Interiors, Cincinnati

"An atmosphere that appeals to the senses. It goes beyond typical elegance or comfort with the highest quality of materials and goods in a simple design." —Greta L. Tyson, interior designer, Bova Furniture, Symmes Township

"The concept of luxury in the home furnishings field has expanded over the last few years. Luxury, for most of us, means having above-and-beyond the daily necessities—a walk-in closet, a Jacuzzi, a large updated kitchen, an ample bathroom in which to be pampered, in-home theater and other innovations. While these kinds of additions still connote luxury, we find that comfort, coziness—rooms that invite your guests to feel at home—[along with] coordination of favorite colors and details such as moldings, hardware and fine art are just as important." —Mike Willis, Patty Horwitz, Joe Prenner, designers, M. Willis Interiors, Oakley

"A luxury home is well-planned with creative and thoughtful approaches to function and form. State-of-the-art conveniences merge with cutting-edge design to create luxury." —Sally Waxman, owner/interior designer, Silky Way, Montgomery

"The luxury home interior, when at its finest, should be a blend of wall color, fabrics and textures. Striking florals and artwork also bring warmth and appeal to the home as well as a mix of furnishings consisting of iron, wood and stone." —Karen Sacksteder, owner, Sacksteder's Interiors, Montgomery, New Trenton, Ind.



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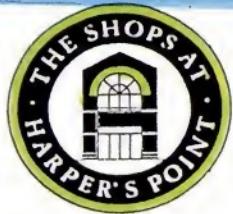
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timeless designs that are never trendy will always be viewed as luxurious and yet welcoming." —Beth Hoffman, president and co-owner, and Grace Jones, senior designer, Hoffman & Albers Interiors, Kenwood

"My definition of a luxury home is that it should include comfort, style, originality and great quality of workmanship and materials." —June Surber, owner, June Surber & Associates Inc., Blue Ash

"A luxurious room also has an intimate feel about it. I like a layered look of rich color, pattern and a range of textiles and surfaces." —Patty Williams, in-house designer, Wooden Nickel Antiques & Gardens, Cincinnati, Lebanon

"A luxurious home interior is defined by good bones. It all starts with this: If your home doesn't have them you must create them; if your home does have them you are

several steps ahead in creating the ultimate in a luxurious interior. Then, I incorporate high-quality fabrics into the interior so that they complement the furniture and feel of the residence. This is truly an area where quality does count." —Robert Dean, owner, Cincinnati Antiques and Ferguson's Antique Mall, Cincinnati

What are a few secrets for creating a luxurious room?

"Generously filled and fluffed cushions in upholstered pieces, full and flowing draperies and a hint of shimmer in fabrics that invite your touch definitely add to the feel of luxury. Millwork is an imperative detail, particularly in traditional design." —Sally Waxman, owner/interior designer, Silky Way, Montgomery

"A few tips for a luxurious room: Use inviting warm colors, a variety of textures and go overboard with plush accessories." —Greta L.

Tyson, interior designer, Bova Furniture, Symmes Township

"Secrets include details, from moldings to paint finishes. The addition of beautiful moldings, columns, chair rails, unique paint colors or finishes or beautiful hand-painted or printed wallpaper create a very luxurious room. Window treatments add depth, character and splashes of color, texture or pattern."

"Color would be my number one suggestion for creating a luxurious home interior. The use of color is one of the easiest ways to create luxury. Finding unique pieces of furniture and beautiful high-quality accessories are also key. When accessorizing, less is more. If you cannot find high quality, it is better to build your space over time than to fill it with less-than-wonderful objects, furnishings and fabrics." —Robert Dean, owner, Cincinnati Antiques and Ferguson's Antique Mall, Cincinnati



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"To create a luxurious room, indulge your senses: sight, touch, smell and sound. Combine beautiful colors, rich textures and fresh flowers or scented candles." —Christie Crawford, interior designer, Closson's, Montgomery

"Tell a story inside each room by bringing together all your colors and patterns. Accent your style and subject matter with artwork and unique floral designs. Choosing compatible colors, soft or bold, will have an influence on your room." —Karen Sacksteder, owner, Sacksteder's Interiors, Montgomery, New Trenton, Ind.

"Careful attention to the selection of fabrics and the interplay of textural effects is important. Find something you love and build off of it. Be creative and open to the subtleties of all tactile elements. Overly stuffed, down-filled pillows, luxurious trims and attention to fine details will set the stage for developing a luxurious environment. The transition from room

to room should be seamless and gentle to the eye." —Beth Hoffman, president and co-owner, and Grace Jones, senior designer, Hoffman & Albers Interiors, Kenwood

"Details. This applies to the thought given to the placement of furniture and art, color, lamps and accessories." —June Surber, owner, June Surber & Associates Inc., Blue Ash

"I have a few techniques that I use when luxury is the goal. I start with carefully collected furnishings, paying close attention to artwork and personal items, both of which impart an intimacy, which is key. The architectural appointments in a room can add significantly to the overall statement and I always consider how I can best balance those with the furnishings. The ultimate test is quite simple: When I'm in a room and I don't want to leave, the illusion is complete!" —Nancy Paul, interior designer, Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell, Montgomery

"The secret is simplicity. Coherent and complete rooms that include perfect details such as crown molding, wainscoting and architectural details that allow for flow. Arranging a room to be inviting yet, at the same time, dynamic doesn't mean rushing out to buy the newest trend but rather using old and new furnishings, art and other divergent components with care, still keeping lifestyle foremost in your design." —Mike Willis, Patty Horwitz, Joe Prenter, designers, M. Willis Interiors, Oakley

"Be daring. Don't be afraid. Mix your finishes with colors. Be creative in arrangement and lighting. Don't give people what they expect—give them something that is unexpected. Take yourself out of what your parents and grandparents did. Avoid furnishings that match—two lamps, two end tables, two night stands. Not everything has to be chrome or brass. The most politically correct is mixing everything up, but at the same time creating a beautiful presentation that speaks to the pub-

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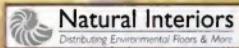


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lic." —Henry T. Vittetoe III, president, Vittetoe Interior Design, Inc., Taylor Mill

"Decide on how, who and what time of day or night this room will be used. A room used for entertaining mostly in the evenings might best be furnished in rich colors with burnished metal accents. A room used mostly in daylight might benefit from layers of soft fabrics, tone-on-tone colors." —Patty Williams, in-house designer, Wooden Nickel Antiques & Gardens, Cincinnati, Lebanon

How does lighting affect the mood and elegance of a room? How do you create elegant lighting? Are there any particular bulbs that are better for creating special effects?

"To start with, remember that chandeliers and other lighting fixtures are the 'jewelry of the house.' Light from wall sconces adds elegance and intrigue to any room. A little trick to add



warmth to any décor is to put pink-toned light bulbs in a table or floor lamp." —Patty Williams, in-house designer, Wooden Nickel Antiques & Gardens, Cincinnati, Lebanon

"Lighting is paramount. Creating shadows, direct versus indirect lighting, the wattage used and placement of the lighting is vital in the

development of a room's personality. A single spotlight, correctly placed, can make even a simple object a shining star." —Beth Hoffman, president and co-owner, and Grace Jones, senior designer, Hoffman & Albers Interiors, Kenwood

"Lighting has a great effect whether it enhances the mood or color of a room, lights

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sculptures and art, creates softness or enriches hues that you're working with. Some of the bulbs that have come out—GE color-enhancing bulbs that are true color—make reds look red and blacks look black. Some of the new decorative bulbs they've created have a true white light versus a yellow light." —Henry T. Vittetoe III, president, Vittetoe Interior Design, Inc., Taylor Mill

"Lighting is often overlooked and is one of the most important aspects of a luxurious home interior. All lighting should be on dimmers. Down lighting at seating areas should be placed either slightly in front or slightly behind where a person will be sitting. Down lighting placed directly overhead makes you look haggard. Back lighting behind furniture or objets d'art creates a soft ambient mood that is tranquil and calming. It also makes the space more 'important.' Rope lighting can easily be installed in bookcases or cabinets and adds a 'halo' of light. I like the use of low voltage

halogen and bulbs with a full spectrum light to bring the outdoors in. Strategically placed can lighting, behind plants or in dark corners, 'lifts' a space and creates interesting effects. Light also can help lift one's mood, making you and your guests feel better." —Robert Dean, owner, Cincinnati Antiques and Ferguson's Antique Mall, Cincinnati

"Mixing natural—sunlight, and candles—with controlled designed lighting on dimmers." —Kurt Bietenduvel, designer, Valerie Makstell Interiors, Cincinnati

"Lighting is possibly one of the most under-utilized aspects in a room yet it can make such a dramatic difference! With the flick of a switch, a room can be transformed from bright and busy to quiet and cozy. I'm excited about the new choices we're seeing in colored glass, particularly amber and cobalt blue. I use amber when I'm going for a mellow feeling. Cobalt imparts high energy, sort of a double

espresso effect. Another look I love is artwork lighting. There's nothing else that can make an image come alive in quite the same way and eliminate overspill lighting on a canvas. Another trend is uplighting plants. Both cast interesting shadows. Columns fitted with recessed halogen lights can [bring the light down] and wash the columns, creating a beautiful effect." —Nancy Paul, interior designer, Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell, Montgomery

"Lighting defines shapes and colors. It creates ambience. A red room with lots of natural light will seem vibrant and energizing. The same room at night lit by a crystal chandelier and accent lighting will appear warm and comfortable. Use a variety of lighting sources: overhead lighting, accent lights such as wall sconces and table lamps. Use dimmers and colored shades to alter the mood. Halogens will highlight art work and sculpture. Pink incandescents create a warm glow.



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Faceted candelabra bulbs produce sparkle and less glare. Use a combination of lights to create highs and lows, which will attract your eye." —Christie Crawford, interior designer, Closson's, Montgomery

"Good lighting enhances the comfort by creating good atmosphere. Elegant lighting consists of accent lighting that emphasizes décor. Any low voltage bulbs will create the right mood." —Greta L. Tyson, interior designer, Bova Furniture, Symmes Township

"Lighting must first of all relate to the function of the room. Soft and indirect lighting for an intimate dining room. Bright and clear lighting for the kitchen area. Too bright of light can cause a room to feel sterile and uninviting. Use cans and dimmers to control indirect lighting and be sure to have appropriate lighting on all works of art." —Mike Willis, Patty Horwitz, Joe Prentner, designers, M. Willis Interiors, Oakley

How can fabrics make a space more luxurious? What fabrics do you suggest?

"The mingling of fabrics, textures and patterns can add warmth and sophistication to your room. I suggest mixing fabrics—small scale prints, plaids, stripes, florals. Adding a solid or two to this gives your eye a place to rest. Also, adding a touch of silk can make a place more luxurious." —Karen Sacksteder, owner, Sacksteder's Interiors, Montgomery, New Trenton, Ind.

"Fabrics that are soft and inviting to the touch such as velvets, chenille and soft cottons give a sense of luxury and comfort. Soft leather and thicker Oriental and area rugs create a sense of comfort and invitation." —Mike Willis, Patty Horwitz, Joe Prentner, designers, M. Willis Interiors, Oakley

"I like fabrics to be usable. I use a lot of soft textures such as chenille, suede and leather.

The accenting can be done with interesting patterns." —June Surber, owner, June Surber & Associates Inc., Blue Ash

"Chenille, velvet, cut chenille, silk and linen all create luxury." —Beth Hoffman, president and co-owner, and Grace Jones, senior designer, Hoffman & Albers Interiors, Kenwood

"Fabrics create the whole theme/feeling by accenting the style of furniture, window treatments and accessories. To make a room more luxurious, concentrate on using rich fabrics that emphasize a chic formal style such as herringbone/ultra suede, leather and a classic pattern with a sheen to the material." —Greta L. Tyson, interior designer, Bova Furniture, Symmes Township

"Fabrics can give a whole different feel to many rooms. Silk. Velvet. Crewel. Tapestry. There are so many wonderful knockoff fabrics that feel or look like silk. The way they finish

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the surface of the fabric—it is often hard to tell the real from the imitation." —Henry T. Vittetoe III, president, Vittetoe Interior Design, Inc., Taylor Mill

"There are many wonderful 'faux' fabrics simulating embossed leathers and suedes and incredible polyesters that simulate the look and feel of silk. These are for those who want the look of luxury at a fraction of the cost. For those with no budget constraints, the real thing (sometimes enhanced with fabulous beading and embroidery) easily runs into the hundreds of dollars per yard." —Sally Waxman, owner/interior designer, Silky Way, Montgomery

"Fabrics are truly the place where one should invest in quality. They will make or break a room and take a fabulous space and bring it down or take a ho hum space and make it pop. Fabrics give you most of the 'feeling' of the room and can be used to tie the room together and allow it

to flow to the other spaces in the home.

"Depending on the room, luxury means different things—in a library, leather and mohair are always my favorite; formal living room, silk and wool; comfy retreats require chenille, soft wool, alpaca, cashmere and wool mink blends. [When choosing fabrics,] you also have to consider the climate, use and lifestyle." —Robert Dean, owner, Cincinnati Antiques and Ferguson's Antique Mall, Cincinnati

"Fabrics soften hard surfaces and deaden sound. A variety of fabric textures appeal to the senses. Fabrics and texture make a room more graceful. Silk, velvet, chenille, crewel, linen." —Christie Crawford, interior designer, Closson's, Montgomery

"Fabrics and the use of several different textures in one room add a touch of luxury. Think of silk and satin pillows on a plush velvet sofa or the charm and grandeur of a flat weave tap-

stry paired with a thick chenille." —Patty Williams, in-house designer, Wooden Nickel Antiques, Cincinnati, Lebanon

"It depends on the space and wants of a client. I wouldn't suggest 100 percent cotton to a woman with six children." —Kurt Bietenduvel, designer, Valerie Makstall Interiors, Cincinnati

"Fabrics have a dramatic effect in creating a luxurious space. The industry is constantly changing patterns, colors and textures. Striking fabrics with large patterns that repeat will certainly set the tone and color scheme for a room. They can be the beginning to an entire theme. Luxurious fabrics can be soft and flowing, such as silk or faux silk, while tapestry prints provide wonderful texture. Each says something different but equally stunning in a well-designed room. Texture as much as color and design speak to the ultimate look of a room." —Nancy Paul, interior designer, Interiors by Nancy Paul and Julie Bell, Montgomery ■



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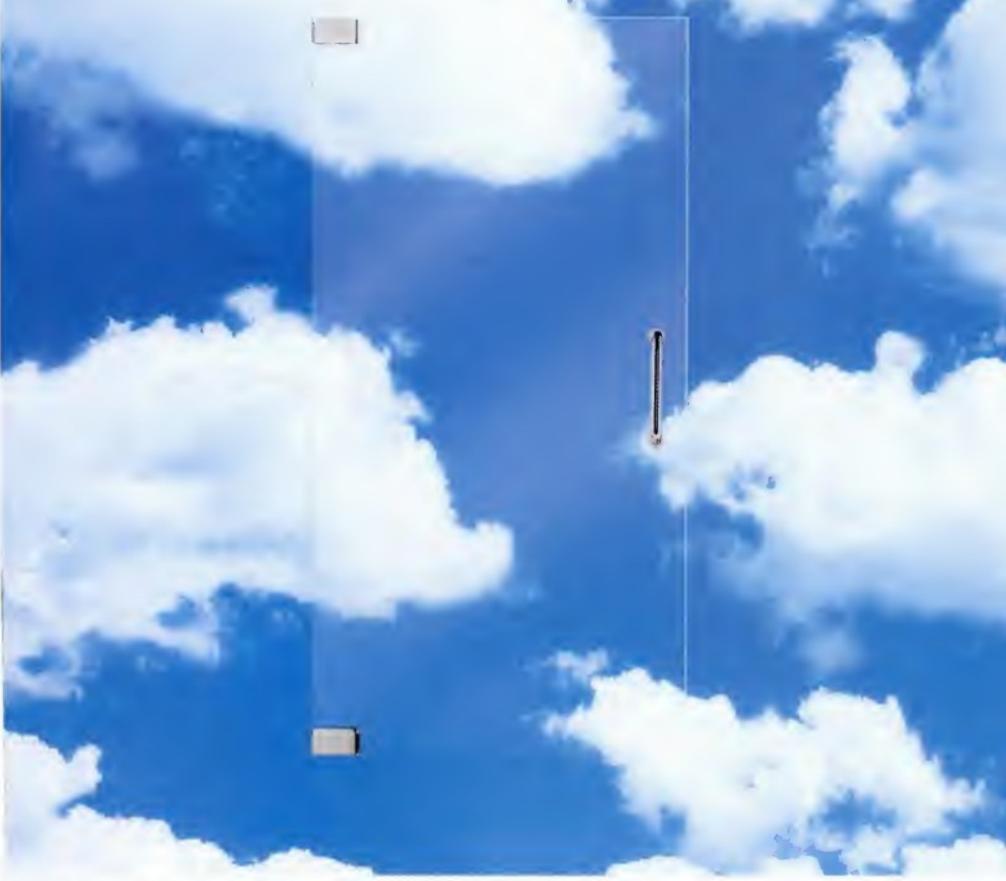
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When Hensley Homes designed Abbington Hall, a home featured in this year's HOMEARAMA® Luxury Edition, a great deal of care was taken to situate it on the perfect spot. Of course, the position for the house was important, but it was the master bath that really motivated the location, says Tim Hensley, president of the Symmes Township-based builder.

The bath overlooks a secluded five-acre valley that, according to Henry T. Vittetoe III who designed the space, resembles a forest retreat. At the far end of the room is the tub, which sits in front of a bank of six unusually shaped windows that are set in the wall in such a way as to attract the most light. The bath offers complete privacy and because of the scenery, the ultimate in relaxation.

It wasn't that long ago that whirlpool tubs and double vanities were considered among the most luxurious accoutrements in master baths. Today, however, a master bath is becoming one of the fanciest rooms in the house, according to many builders and designers. When homeowners are planning the bath, amenities generally start out small, then as the planning continues, expand to become larger, lavish retreats. And even though the costs may run high, more homeowners are finding room in their budgets for extras that will help them escape into their own personal spa at home.

Creating calm

In these turbulent times, homeowners are turning real estate into not only a safe investment but a safety zone—a place to feel at ease, a nest, says Paul Williams, vice president of sales and marketing for BASCO Shower Doors of Elegance in Mason. In a recent consumer research poll, 61 percent of Americans

Cool Tips

- * Replace standard "slab" bathroom mirrors with smaller, framed mirrors.
- * Add brightness to your bathroom with ceiling lights.
- * Run your bathroom counter over the toilet tank to gain counter space.
- * Follow the latest trend and raise the height of your bathroom vanity to make it level with your kitchen cabinets.

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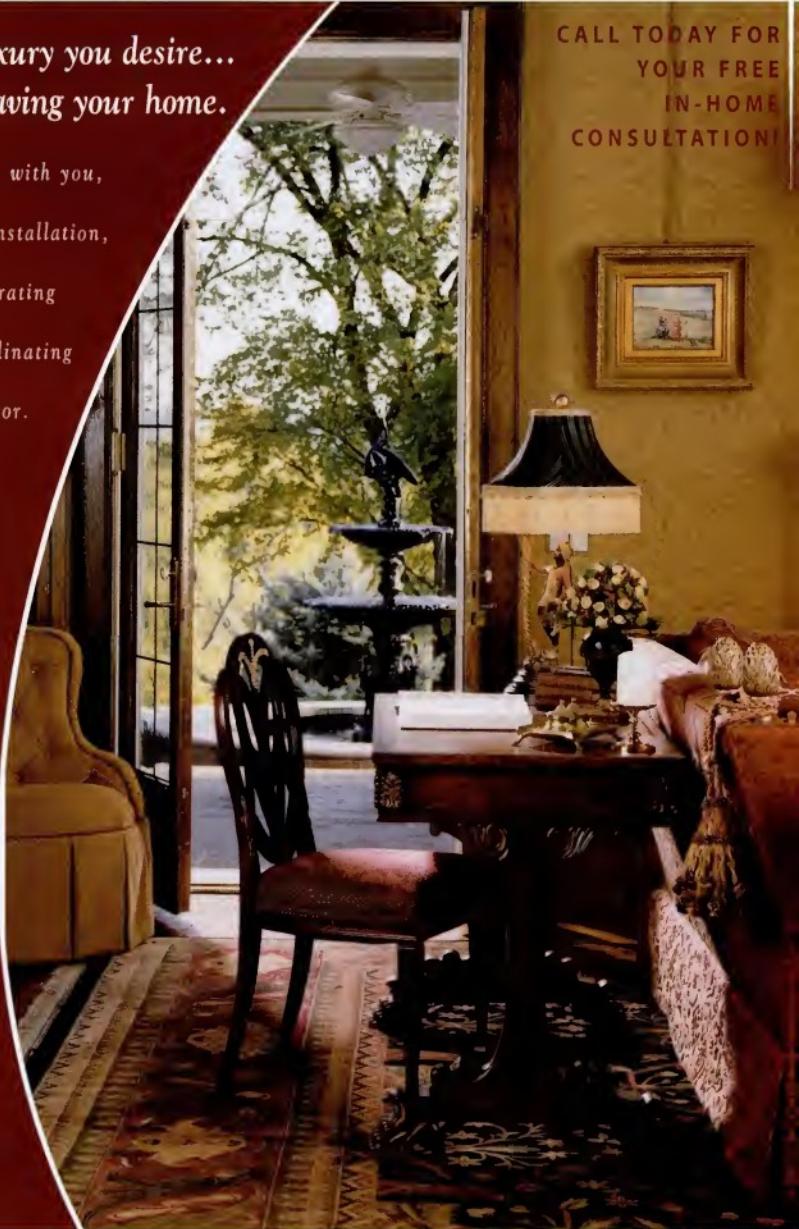
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Tubs can now provide a bubbling action rather than a burst of air—think of dropping an Alka Seltzer in the bath and basking in the fizz.

preferred their homes to be comfortable and intimate. In addition, eight out of 10 homeowners wanted a bath to be a "comfort zone," or a "show place."

The research, which is helping to direct not only Williams' business focus, but many others, is spawning a marketplace filled with the most interesting products for high-end bathrooms. "What you are seeing is a marketing effort by major manufacturers," says David Dressler, CEO of International Kitchen and Bath Studio in downtown Cincinnati.

New features in master baths range from multiple electronic showerheads that mimic "rainforest" settings, whole-room mood lighting and effervescent bubbles in whirlpool tubs.

Then, there's the plasma TV, built-in audio equipment and juice bar along with a fireplace, heated floors, granite, tile and art glass surfaces and skylights in the shower.

Dressler recently designed a "master bath" on the lower level of a home that featured a 15-by-12-foot steam room, a separate massage room, a workout area and even lockers for guests.

Relaxing in the tub

While whirlpool baths are generally standard in most new-home master bathrooms, they have evolved considerably. These small slices of paradise used to be powered by motors pushing water through jets. Then they matured into a different kind of jet that pushes air instead of water for a lighter touch.

Now manufacturers offer a relaxing option

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that Dressler calls effervescence. Tubs can now provide a bubbling action rather than a burst of air—think of dropping an Alka Seltzer in the bath and basking in the fizz.

Other whirlpool systems provide custom water control flow from jets, electronic touch pads and remote control panels. Others may feature up to 18 hydrotherapy jets for customized deep tissue massage, an in-line heater that works in combination with heated air jets that line the floor of the bath, a pulsating neck pillow or hand-held shower.

Kohler has also devised a tub-within-a-tub where water flows over the rim in a soft sheet and into the outer tub, producing a waterfall of sorts. Women love the effect, but "most men don't get it," laughs Dressler.

Power in the shower

What men may get are the newest in hi-tech showers. Today's wide range of products can turn a typical shower into a massage experience, adds David Buschle, design and planning manager for Fischer Homes in Crescent Springs.

A shower can produce a "body spray" effect by offering as many as three or four more showerheads positioned at various heights. The sprayers are horizontal and positioned in

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New bells and whistles in master baths include:

- * Electronic showerheads with "rainforest" settings
- * Whole-room mood lighting you can program with the touch of a button
- * Bubbling whirlpools
- * Underwater lights that change colors
- * High ceilings
- * Plasma televisions
- * Built-in televisions and audio equipment
- * Heated floors
- * Shower skylights
- * Minibars
- * Shower walls made out of real rocks
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- * Large sitting areas
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one direction. "Or you can have them come from multi-directions," explains home builder Hensley.

The multiple heads pulsate and rotate as well, and they do just fine when there's no time to wait for the tub to fill. "It's almost a vertical whirlpool," adds Buschle.

The shower space is larger, too. It can accommodate built-in seats—for relaxing or shaving—and two "his and hers" showerheads placed on opposite sides, says Patty Kirk, managing director of Zaring Premier Homes. She adds that shower stalls are a thing of the past.

Today, showers can even be enclosed and double as steam rooms. Turn on the hot water and presto—instant health club, explains Hensley.

Finally, in the most dramatic of changes, showers can be so massive that there is no need for a door at all; it's simply a large open space with a curb to catch water. At last year's HOMEARAMA® Luxury Edition, the Hensley home featured a large open shower—with no door—with walls of limestone and decorative tiles.

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Bathing in atmosphere

Along with dramatic showers and waterfall tubs, the interior design of the master bath has evolved into a place with a warm, inviting ambiance, says Williams of BASCO. "People are getting exposed to luxury resorts and baths and all the glamour," he says. "They want to bring it home."

High-end homeowners also want custom cabinetry with furniture-style finishes and paneled and beveled glass insets. Traditional dark cherry finishes are still among the most popular finishes, according to Buschle.

Enhancing the cabinets are softer-looking metal fixtures including faucets in brushed nickel, a popular choice, according to Williams, along with an oil-rubbed bronze finish with a flat, dark brown glaze and gold accents.

Glass decorative tiles, limestone and granite are among the materials used in the bath, not only for countertops but for floors. Carpeting—like showers for one person—is history, says Kirk, adding that ceramic is one of her favorite materials for the bath. There's nothing like it for resale value and the occasional spill

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of nail polish, she says. "It's so easy to maintain. It's durable. Most of all, it's a first-class, luxury look."

Besides all natural materials, solid surface products such as DuPont's Corian continue to show up in the master bath. Corian, for example, mimics the look of real marble and granite and comes in dozens of colors—unlike natural stone, says Kirk. "People are going to Corian in the bath, not just the kitchen," she says.

Detailed trim, moldings, columns and faux

finishes on the walls that mimic Old World and European styles create additional custom looks.

Pulling out the stops

While mood lighting in bathrooms is nothing new, a new concept called chromotherapy is, says International Kitchen and Bath Studio's Dressler. Let's say you want to feel motivated for an important business meeting. Try adding some red lights to the bath. Or if a sense of calm is your goal, choose blue instead. Home-



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owners can also choose a rotating series of colors to promote mental harmony and balance.

For natural light, skylights and large windows are all easy requests to satisfy, says Kim Pellington, construction coordinator for Robert Lucke Homes, Inc. Offering natural, filtered light, a skylight can sit deep inside the ceiling of the shower.

"Four-by-four-feet windows are common," adds Pellington. And those who want a window view near the tub can also opt for a stained glass insert. It's all part of making the bath more than just a room required by nature. "It's the room they can be the most creative with," she says.

Making it convenient

Today's custom master bath might be inviting and showy, but it still has to work with the lifestyle of the owner. People are asking for more space in the bath, even if they settle for a smaller bedroom, says Pellington. With more space, they can add more custom shelves and cabinets, separate closets, dressing areas and vanities for men and women as well as walk-in closets. Others want exercise, seating or massage table areas adjacent to the bath.

Obviously, since homeowners will spend so much time in their master bathrooms, they will need to connect with the outside world at some point. Most want, at a minimum, a television and phone line. Televisions can be placed on rotating tables so they can be viewed from multiple directions. A plasma TV is a good choice since it takes up so little space.

In addition, small refrigerators are a pampering choice for the bath—for juice following a stint in the steam room or a glass of wine during a bath.

Pellington describes yet one more convenience upscale homeowners ask for: "They want to have direct access from the master bathroom to the laundry room," she says. "It's a desire easily satisfied since second floor laundry areas have become quite common."

As home builders and bathroom designers help homeowners redefine bathroom basics, they're bringing a wealth of new comforts home. Residents in today's luxury homes may find that the sweetest escape lies not on the other side of the world, but just outside their bedroom doors.

Expert Advice

Local bathroom design and remodeling professionals weigh in on what you need to know about the most valuable real estate—inch for inch—in your home:

Safety first. From tub height to floor grout, include safety precautions in any bathroom planning, says David Dressler, president of International Kitchen and Bath Studio. "You can make something beautiful that is unsafe," he explains. To minimize falls, avoid placing steps outside of tubs. Also, consider smaller tiles on the floor to allow more space for water to flow and feet to grip. "The larger the tile on the floor, the more dangerous," Dressler says.

Think outside the tub. "If you don't take a bath more than three times a week, consider gaining square footage by installing a shower instead," advises Rich Maile, president of maile.build.design. "Spend your money where you spend your time." Money you save by nixing a seldom-used tub can be spent on more dramatic options, he says, like a translucent glass bowl with back-lighting that makes the sink glow.

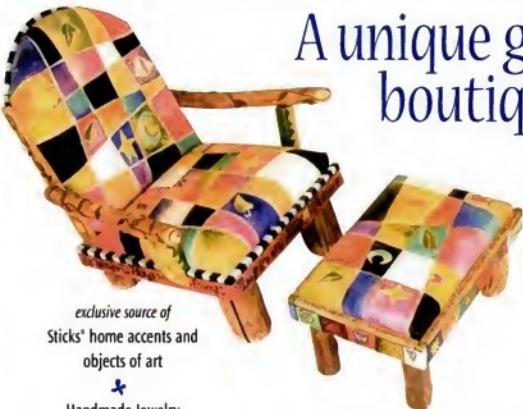
Plan ahead. Coordinate plans with your designer and contractor for maximum convenience during bathroom remodels. "Have the cabinets delivered two weeks before they are to be installed so they can check for damage," says Tina Watson of Builders FirstSource. That way any replacements, which could normally cause weeks' worth of delays, can be taken care of in advance.

Get comfortable. According to Jennifer Dumoulin, a design consultant/interior designer at J.P. Flooring Systems, homeowners should consider their lifestyle during their bathroom design process.

Choosing the right designer and contractor does make a difference. "They're going to be in your house every day, five days a week, for a while," she says. "Can you handle it?"

Keep it clean. In bathrooms especially, cleanliness counts. Marymac Schooley, a showroom designer at Kemper Design Center, tells customers that light and airy bathroom designs communicate more than good taste. "They tend to look cleaner," she says. Finally, you can't go wrong with neutral colors on hard surfaces like main floors and shower walls. "If you keep it neutral, you can always work in other colors and accessorize."

—Elissa Sonnenberg

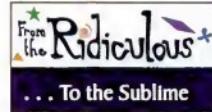


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SPACE PADS

[cont. from page 57]

If linking washing machines to the Internet sounds extreme, hh Gregg's Kauffman doesn't think so. He predicts that manufacturers' latest research project—connecting appliances to phone lines so that they can be automatically checked for service needs and used to call homeowners before problems arise—will be a reality before too long.

Still other advances loom on the clothes-cleaning horizon. "I've heard that they are working on cleaning laundry with ultrasound," Zetterberg says.

Stimulating Sights, Sounds

While family life revolves around the kitchen, family fun takes root in front of screens—big, flat screens. Forty percent of American homes include three or more televisions, and the TV in the average home is on more than seven hours a day, according to statistics compiled by

the TV-Turnoff Network. A 2001 survey by the Interactive Digital Software Association shows that 35 percent of Americans rank computer and video games as the most fun entertainment activity, with TV viewing in a surprising second place at 18 percent.

Customers expect to spend money for their entertainment, but for their investments, they also want more control than ever before. "Everyone in a home wants to watch what they want, when they want and where they want," says Rob Gardner, CEO of ANY-DISH.com, a satellite television and home theater business in Norwood.

For example, today's high-end media rooms allow players to match wits with game opponents on other continents, pause and rewind live television programs and tap into thousands of satellite television and radio channels. And every piece of the home entertainment technological pie amounts to big money. Analysts estimate that the global wireless gaming business alone will top \$9 billion by 2008.

Most media centers' focus, however, remains on the television and a revolution in image quality—thanks in large part to High Definition Television, or HDTV, which broadcasts with more than 1 million vertical and horizontal lines of resolution. Along with clearer pictures, HDTV brings the capacity for "channel stacking," a process which allows a single television station to broadcast multiple programs over the same frequency at the same time, Gardner explains. For example, a local PBS station may offer three different shows for viewers during the same hour. "Now we're getting more," Gardner says.

Taking advantage of the new picture clarity available depends on digital display technology, an arena in which two dominant systems, plasma and LCD, currently vie for customer loyalty. Industry experts predict that both of these flat screen options will gain advocates. By 2008, the sales of flat panel TVs will jump from 2.2 million to 37.8 million, according to industry forecaster Strategy Analytics.

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High-Tech Shopping Lists

Trips to electronics and appliance stores can quickly lead to sensory overload, not to mention sticker shock. Manufacturers woo customers with clean designs, catchy names and promises of easy living. But making the best decisions for your home still begins with good, old-fashioned homework—made easier today with the help of some handy, high-tech tools.

- * **Power:** Investigate whether the appliances of your dreams work with the reality of your home's current electrical system. Take a good look at your fuse box and know your limits. For example, while the GE Advantium oven may be tempting, do you have the requisite 220 wiring to support its operations? Also consider how you'll protect more powerful electronic equipment from damage. Factor in all associated costs, from rewiring to power strips, and budget accordingly.
- * **Ease of use:** Try using the appliance before buying it, or working the remote before you pull out your credit card. Consider the features that you like most about your favorite model, then see how easy it will be for you to use them. Can home entertainment additions be networked for streamlined control? Can a new oven/microwave be programmed even if you don't have a degree in computer science?
- * **Installation:** Ask questions about how simple the product is to install. Can you do it yourself or does it require a professional? Again, factor additional costs and time investments into your budget.
- * **Price:** Shop and compare the prices of the same appliances at several different retailers and distributors. While some manufacturers protect the prices of their newest products, others don't. Another way to cut costs? Ask retailers to add free delivery, installation or removal of old appliances to clinch the deal.
- * **Limitations:** Research as many different options as possible before you shop. Major manufacturers maintain Web sites with pictures and descriptions of their products, including size and other specifications. Try to pick a few favorites, then see how they compare to your expectations. And understand that even new technologies come with pros and cons. For example, while front load washing machines offer many benefits, they don't let you open the door mid-cycle to toss in a forgotten sock. Smooth electric cooktops may be easier to clean than their gas counterparts, but some stain easily and require special cleansers.

For a more comprehensive guide to consumer electronics' shopping and installation tips, check out the Consumer Electronics Association's *Switched On! Product Care Guide*, available on the trade organization's Web site, www.ce.org.

—Elissa Sonnenberg



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Plasma screens make up most of the flat screen TVs on the market today. Their crisp pictures emanate from chemical reactions that create tiny pixels of colored light, not solid tubes like standard TVs. "The detail of the picture is so sharp that it gives greater depth to your image," says Gardner. "It's almost a 3D effect without the cheesy glasses."

LCDs, on the other hand, have long been used in personal computers, digital clocks and microwaves. In LCD, liquid crystals sit between two layers of glass plates and change colors in regular patterns based on small temperature changes. The resulting flat screen requires less power than a traditional TV and depending upon its quality, produces images that can rival plasma quality. LCDs can be thinner, lighter weight and run cooler. They can also be brighter than plasma. Currently, LCD screens are limited as much by price as by size, but companies like Samsung and Sharp continue to work on expanding their capabilities.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SONY CORPORATION

SHARPER IMAGE: Flat plasma screens like those made by Sony (above) capitalize on chemistry to create bright, crisp pictures.

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As engineers tinker with more powerful and practical LCDs, the price of plasma screens continues to drop. "It's amazing what you can buy electronics for today," Gardner says. For example, today plasma products have settled squarely on the high end of the mainstream, about half of their original price or more than \$20,000.

In addition, the complete theater-like atmosphere of home electronics continues to improve. Gardner cites a new product he saw at a recent consumer electronics show. Small motors, installed under seats or inside floor joists, connect to stereos and tap into low sound frequencies so that viewers will feel a real jolt when a train rattles by on the screen or a shake when an airplane flies low overhead. "You're doing that without turning up the volume," he explains. "It's quite an experience."

Gardner also touts the benefits of home computer networks, and sees an increased desire among homeowners to coordinate their growing arsenal of electronic equipment—from PCs to TVs to DVDs and whole-house stereo systems.

Such high-quality audio and video choices for media centers stand in stark—and costly—contrast to the bunny ears and limited channels of a generation ago. Gardner estimates complete media centers with plasma screens and surround sound currently range from \$10,000 to more than \$100,000, and can include voice-activation and satellite options. But the impact goes deeper than homeowners' bank accounts, he maintains.

Technology products with the greatest "consumer appeal," he says, are those that offer new and tangible benefits. "[Technology] has to be easy and give you a better quality of life." He cites the popularity of personal video recorders (PVRs) and digital video recorders (DVRs) as examples. These new recorders allow viewers to pause live television and skip through commercials on recorded programs, among other features. "They change the way you watch TV," Gardner says.

For instance, TiVo, or "TV Your Way," bills itself as a "tapeless VCR." The equipment and monthly service can automatically record favorite television programs—up to 80 hours' worth. "TiVo is smart," Gardner says. "It will actually establish a profile for you and

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start prompting you with available programs." Similar recording devices stand out from the high-tech pack because they offer such immediate rewards. "Whenever I watch an hour's worth of TV, I watch it in 50 minutes," says Gardner, referring to the significant time savings when he skips past commercials. While he saves time, he also gains more control. In the middle of a favorite "live" show, for example, he can simply press a button if his wife or children want to share exciting news or ask a question. "When I hit 'pause,' my family has my undivided attention," he says. "I don't miss a beat."

Full House Control

With nearly unlimited electronic opportunities and "wow" factors, advocates maintain that the popularity of technology still relies on its usability. "It has to be easy," says Gardner. "It's got to save you time; it's got to save you effort."

Bill Hartglass, director of Cincinnati Bell's Complete Protection home and business services, agrees. Complete Protection packages offer whole-house burglar and fire alarm systems as well as monitoring of carbon monoxide and water leaks. "We offer a variety of products that make homeowners' lives easier," he says.

Many homeowners already operate multiple electronic systems daily and the future of home automation promises opportunities to help organize and control them. In automated homes, tall cabinets can serve as ideal hiding places for multiple black boxes that connect everything from window shades to surveillance cameras to electrical outlets throughout the house.

"You should look at a smart home as a developing concept," says Hartglass. One area of potential growth, he explains, might be automated home "energy management." With the right wiring and controls, a homeowner could log on to their house's web site on a warm, muggy day and turn up the air conditioning with a point and a click. "A smart home is

whatever the user decides they want it to be."

Still, as homeowners pick and choose automation applications, Hartglass warns them to pay careful attention to the security of wireless applications that transmit pictures of their homes or other sensitive information. "You want your business staying inside the walls of your home."

Hands-on Help

As technological developments continue to be refined, some will inevitably become as commonplace as microwave ovens, while others will follow the path of WebVan, the much-touted, failed Internet grocery delivery service.

Kaufman, of hh Gregg, imagines a future filled with custom-designed rooms and consumer-friendly products, from telephone hookups that monitor appliance maintenance to bar code scanners that can automatically order new supplies. "I don't see any limitations," he says. "It's great for the customer."



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At Angert's, Zetterberg believes that to convince customers to invest in unusual space-age technology, manufacturers and retailers will have to offer a new type of appliance showroom that actually allows customers to see how the new products work and test them. "How are they going to get people to buy all these new items if they don't let them use them?" he asks.

Industry experts agree that continued electronic evolutions will benefit shoppers at every income level, in part because these new advances, however extravagant or seemingly self-indulgent, share a common goal. "They are really tied into making life in the home more comfortable," Zetterberg says. "Everybody wants an easier life."

But like George Jetson, who discovered that walking his dog on an automated treadmill can quickly become a "crazy thing," today's consumers will ultimately decide how much technology is too much, says Zetterberg. "The question is, how good are the results and are we willing to live with them." ■



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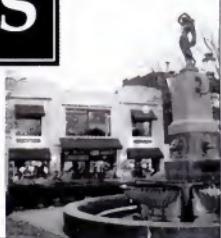


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THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

[cont. from page 65]

rooms have been replaced with larger, open spaces that allow guests to wander about the home. Newer dining spaces include fireplaces, bay windows with seats and other accents designed to warm up the room.

Most homeowners still want their kitchen to open into a spacious great room, although that's changed somewhat, too, adds Brandenburg. The massively high ceilings are being lowered and walls of windows are being added to take advantage of outdoor views. "It's more of a room to use, rather than a museum room," says Brandenburg. May also likes built-in storage cabinets in this room allowing for easy clean up of toys before guests arrive.

Furniture choices are extremely important in these new open places, says Dea Raizk, owner of Norwalk—The Furniture Idea in Hyde Park/Norwood. Varying points of interest can be created with furniture groupings and accent rugs to pull guests into a particular area or to separate one area from another.

Multi-functional pieces become even more

important in these spaces, adds Raizk. Console tables with wine storage beneath can become serving areas during a party. (Marble topped styles are great for handling spills.) Ottomans, used as foot rests during the day, can become cocktail tables at night with the addition of a large tray. Many homeowners choose several ottomans for one room as well as angled, sectional couches, which are useful for creating intimate spaces in open areas.

Accessories are essential, says Raizk, adding that homeowners often use too few or too small accessories in larger rooms. Plants and other items are needed to fill corners and invite guests into various areas. She also recommends personalizing rooms with photos or favorite collections.

"These can be the 'wow' factor in the room," says Raizk.

Let Us Entertain You

Since the goal of HOMEARAMA® builders

and designers is to introduce new ideas and concepts to the public, entertainment spaces are always undergoing changes and reflecting trends.

Television is not as popular as it once was to entertain, according to Millett, who often convinces homeowners to add game tables, which may be brought out for a party to keep adults and kids busy and happy.

Billiards, extremely popular during the Victorian era, is making a comeback but unlike the past, is not stored away in its own separate room. Instead the billiards table is used in combination with other entertainment choices. "The traditional billiard room doesn't lend itself to today's open spaces," says Millett.

For a client who loves wine, Millett designed a special tasting table area on the lower level. And, rather than create a typical lower-level bar space, Millett suggests placing a bar at the back of a home theater. That way adults can keep tabs on younger guests who might be watching a movie or playing video games.

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Speaking of younger guests, some 2003 HOMEARAMA® homes are created with a lower level that is actually a home within a home with a guest suite, a playroom for the children—and their guests—a home theater and wet bar.

Music rooms have given way to whole-home entertainment. Many homeowners want music throughout their houses and include controls in each room.

Home theaters are still popular, according to these designers, but some homeowners opt for more comfortable, cozy seating rather than traditional theater seats. TV screens can also be raised into the ceiling when guests decide they'd rather talk or play games.

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no matter the weather, says Brandenburg.

An in-ground backyard pool is a traditional choice especially for empty-nesters who build them for their grandchildren, says Brian Solzman, vice president of Pools by Design in Blue Ash.

Though smaller in size than in the past, the pools themselves and the surrounding areas tend to be more creative. Among the latest trends: mood lighting in a variety of colors for nighttime swimming; built-in tables in the pool that are topped with umbrellas; spas; vanishing edge swimming pools and cascading waterfalls. In this case, water falls away from the line of sight and into a hidden catch basin. "It's one of the most dramatic effects that has come along in awhile," Solzman says.

And, diving boards—which used to take up some much space—are now being replaced with specialized equipment to play in-water volleyball and basketball games.

Outdoor patios are changing, too. In the past, there was always one large area. However, several are being built on different levels—they can be entered from various areas of the home, from the kitchen or the master bathroom on the main level, from the entertainment area on the lower level. A patio may be created close to the house to accommodate a large grill and a dining area, but additional, smaller spaces are being constructed on other levels for quiet conversations.

These various terraces help to create intimacy, especially when they are well landscaped, says Rick Doesburg, president and owner of Thornton Landscape in Miamiville, who says Cincinnati's terrain is the reason for the phenomenon. "It's important that you create them so that they are functional," he says.

Patios may be designed with a variety of materials, including stamped concrete, concrete pavers or true bricks along with a variety of stone tiles. "The [materials] are incorporating color and realism," says Doesburg. "You have choices of colors and blends."

These materials can also be used for patio walkways, water features and to surround decorative pools. Doesburg often uses the same materials in the front and the rear of the home to create a sense of continuity.

Moving water is a great way to entice guests outside, he says. Water gardens with night-

blooming tropical lilies are another favorite for enhanced drama. And of course, luscious perennial beds are a given; they not only enhance the exterior of the home, but offer respite and beauty. Perennials offer homeowners outdoor gardens that bloom periodically throughout the season, but Doesburg recommends that annuals be planted, too, for continuous color and decorative foliage. "That's what makes it all really sing."



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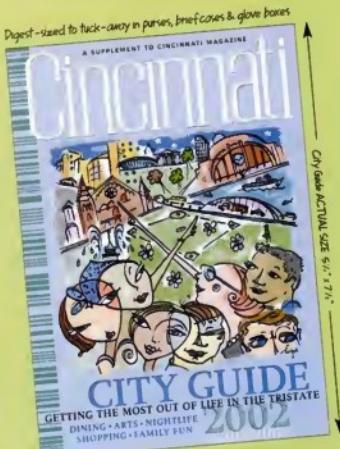


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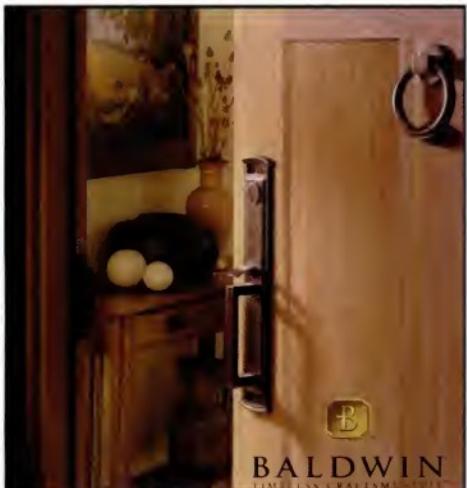
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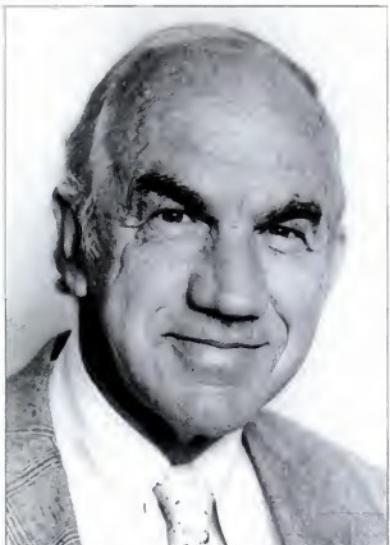
"By the end of the show, he had a 10-foot mound of mud around the perimeter of the parking lot," recalls his longtime friend, Elda Marshall, executive director of the Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati. "In the early days when we were struggling to find sites and get builders, he just did everything he could to make HOMEARAMA® possible. Had it not been for his perseverance and dedication to making the show a success, we wouldn't be doing one today."

Paul, who was director, officer and president of the Home Builders Association, served as the first chairman of the annual home show in 1962. He continued to serve as chairman for 15 years and in 1976, was named "Chairman Emeritus."

On the day Allen E. Paul died—on March 11 at his home in Springfield Township at the age of 84—he actually talked about his love for the home show he helped to create. "He was dedicated to the association—and what we were able to do as a group," says Marshall. "He felt HOMEARAMA® promoted the industry as a whole. It gave us that professional image."

Paul, a native Cincinnatian, was born July 17, 1918, and grew up in Hartwell. Upon graduation from Lockland High School in 1935, he landed his first job installing furnaces. Four years later, he traveled to West Virginia to install a furnace and decided to stay overnight instead of driving back to Cincinnati. He was "fixed-up" with a blind date, Anna Hudanich, whom he married that same year. The couple was married 53 years.

Paul's brother, Lawrence, who began building homes during the



post-World War II building boom, asked Paul to join him in the business and together, they formed Paul Brothers Construction Co. At first, the company was recognized for starter homes in College Hill, but later branched into custom homes and apartments. As the suburbs grew, so did the company, which built shopping centers and apartment complexes and developed subdivisions.

Besides his work with the local HBA, Paul was a founding member, officer and president of the Cincinnati Apartment Association and the Ohio Valley Development Council. He served as a director of the Ohio Home Builders Association as well as a director and area vice president of the National Association of Home Builders for Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia. In 1983, he was honored as an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati.

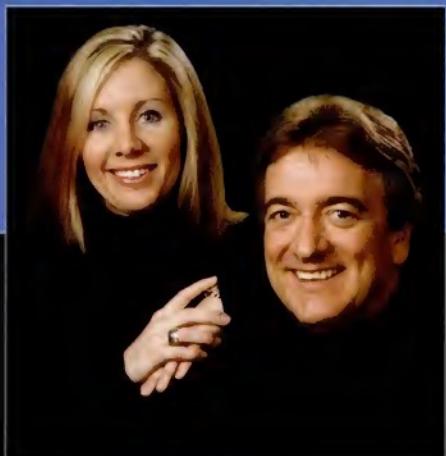
At the time of his death, he was chairman of the Hamilton County Rural Zoning Commission. He also served as a Hamilton County Commissioner and as a member of the Springfield Township Board of Trustees, the Hamilton County Board of Health and the boards of the College of Mount St. Joseph and the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority.

Paul was preceded in death by his wife, Anne, and his daughter, Marilyn Walters. Survivors include his second wife, of 10 years, Bonnie Jellison Paul; two daughters, Charlene Lausche and Sally Simonson, both of Springfield Township; sons Tom of Montgomery and C. Robert of Blue Ash; a stepdaughter, Lisa Elliott of Bexley, Ohio; two stepsons, Eric Paul of Atlanta and Ryan Paul of McLean, Va.; 12 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

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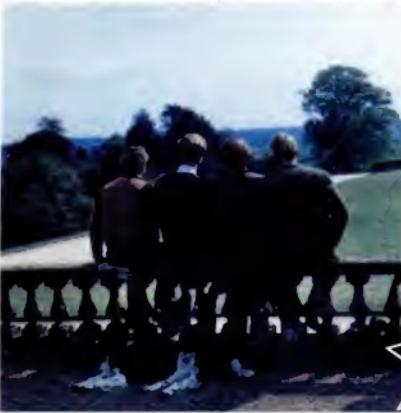
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emphatically. Still, opera à la Muni can be a hard sell to fans and companies who prefer straightforward operatic tragedy, romance and deceit. Which was why Muni had no intention of applying when word spread at the end of 1995 that Cincinnati Opera was looking for a new artistic director.

ACT II

MUNI RECEIVED A CALL from arts consultant Len Alexander, who had heard about the job opening in Cincinnati. He wanted to know if Muni was going to apply. "I said, from what I know about the company, why would they even want to talk to me?"

Alexander insisted the opera was ready to do something new. Muni was skeptical; he'd heard that before. When he had accepted the artistic director's job at Tulsa Opera in 1987, he was a well-established director known for his avant-garde approach. Tulsa trustees knew his work and assured him that they wanted a progressive director. Muni gave them what they asked for. "And from that experience I learned that there is a big difference in defining progressive, talking about it and then seeing it," he says, creasing his forehead into an arch of exasperation. After five seasons, he resigned. "Basically things were going pretty well, but I was limited to what I could do there, and a sense of caution was filtering into my directing work."

Which is no doubt why, after deciding he would go after the job in Cincinnati, Muni went to great lengths to make certain trustees understood his formula for running an opera company. "When he came back for that second interview, he literally laid out his first three or four seasons," Don Hoffman, then chairman of the board, recalls. "He wanted to make sure we understood what we'd be getting if we hired him." Muni also wanted to make sure that if he did accept the job, it was worth giving up the significant work in Europe he'd been free to do as an independent director since leaving Tulsa in 1992.

The truth was, more than a few Cincinnati patrons had grumbled about the final years of former artistic director James DeBlasis. Many said they wanted something beyond traditional productions of the same top 10 operas. When DeBlasis called it quits after 28 years, the trustees decided the first thing they had to determine before launching a search was how serious people were about wanting change. Around 300 pa-

trons, critics, artists and community leaders were invited to participate in focus groups. "People loved the orchestra and quality of singers, but what we heard over and over was a desire for more exciting productions and more contemporary production values," says Patricia Beggs, managing director and Muni's partner in running Cincinnati Opera. After seeing Muni's vision for the company, the search committee decided he was the man.

"A lot of what he told us in those initial interviews got translated into goals for the company," Hoffman says. "We [the trustees] pledged we'd get out and raise the money to realize the things he wanted to do. He pledged he'd do standards, but not like we'd seen them before." He also promised to do operas CO patrons had never seen before. So far, both Muni and the trustees have delivered on those early promises.

The budget has grown from \$2.5 million to \$5.9 million for this season. While the company had envisioned budgets beginning last year of more than \$6 million, the shaky economy has required some reality checks. "I have to say that Nie is very cognizant of the bottom line and knows his way around a spreadsheet as well as anybody I know," Beggs says. "He's willing to make things work with the framework of a budget."

Muni as artistic CEO has certainly delivered on his part of the original bargain. Audiences have been treated to new versions of *The Magic Flute*, *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly* and the aforementioned *Salomé*. And there have been opportunities each season since 1998 to hear operas never before produced by Cincinnati Opera: *Jenůfa*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Pelleas et Melisande*, *Nabucco*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Erwartung*, *Dead Man Walking* and *Elektra*.

The voices Muni puts together for each production keep getting better and better. Aside from a particular singer's off night, there have been few weak links in the past six seasons. Picking singers is one of his strengths. Especially with young singers, Muni the director is also Muni the teacher. Indeed, identifying talent and shaping young voices has become an important part of his work and may well be his ultimate legacy.

ACT III

THREE YOUNG SOPRANOS nervously pace outside the double doors of room 411 on the fourth floor of Riverside Church on Manhattan's Upper West Side. On this bitter December Saturday morning,

they are here to sing for Muni, and for James Fairbanks, CO's artistic administrator; Naomi Hoyt, education director; and Carol Walker, music director of the Young Artist Program and today's accompanist. It is the fourth nine-hour day in a row that the quartet will spend listening to young singers from all over the world vie for one of the eight slots in CO's 2003 Young Artist Program and 2004 Education Outreach Ensemble. The lucky eight will live in residence with the company, be mentored by Muni and guest artists, perform in concert and take small roles in the summer productions. To be chosen is a very big deal.

A lot of dreams are dashed or launched in room 411 in the course of a year. It is a prime audition space for opera and theater companies from all over the country. Cincinnati Opera reserved it months ahead, which makes accompanist Walker's frustration understandable when she discovers a problem with the piano. The G above middle C (a workhorse of a note as notes go) is dead. There is no time to call in a technician, and she'll have to live with the discordant "plunk" every time she hits the key.

The large rectangular room is empty aside from the piano, two folding tables and a few scattered chairs. Hoyt and Fairbanks sit at one table and Muni, with a laptop, sits at the other. About 20 feet directly in front of them, Walker takes her place at the keyboard as the first singer is announced. Angela Leson, who is working on a master's degree in voice at the University of Kentucky, steps through the double doors, comes down four steps and hands her music to Walker. She announces her name and the piece she will sing. Muni nods and she begins. And so it goes over the next three hours as 27 sopranos, tenors and baritones do their best to get on his radar.

All have prepared four to six arias, but only a handful will get to sing more than one. What Muni and the others need to know about a singer's vocal technique and presentation they learn quickly as each one performs. There is virtually no conversation, and the singers are quickly dismissed with a curt "Thank you" when they finish. Most leave without a clue as to the impression they've made.

Throughout the morning, Muni clicks away, taking copious notes on everyone. It is the only way he can keep track of the nearly 500 voices he'll hear during five days of auditions in New York and two in Cincinnati. Although on this day there are

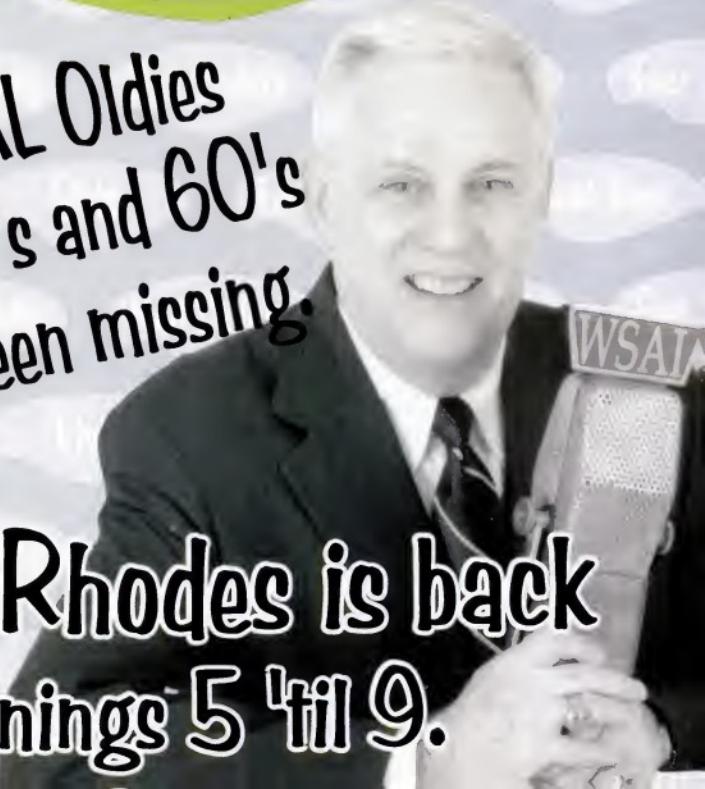
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things he'll have no trouble remembering months later: the blonde soprano whose gauzy *I Dream of Jeannie* outfit revealed her bare midriff every time she gestured, and the problematic piano, which continued to lose notes the rest of the day.

Muni's laptop database contains his impressions of nearly 3,000 singers. He fully understands what is at stake each time a singer stands before him at an audition, silently pleading 'choose me.' As a teenager and young man, he stood in their shoes, often being the one singled out for success. By the age of 17 he was singing professionally and was a particular favorite of conductor Sarah Caldwell for small roles at Boston Opera. His future as an operatic baritone seemed certain.

ACT IV

NIC MUNI COULD HAVE taken another career path altogether if his father, Nicholas, hadn't issued an ultimatum when Nic began sixth grade. "I was playing football, and my father wanted me to join the choir, too," Muni says. When Nic balked, papa Nicholas threatened: Either join the

choir or quit football. It only took a few rehearsals to convince Nic that singing was just as cool as playing ball. It also quickly became clear that he had talent.

Despite growing up on a vegetable farm outside of Richland, N.J., Muni and his two brothers got a steady diet of opera. Papa Nicholas, who had come to the U.S. from Palermo, Sicily, in 1930, had the radio tuned to the Texaco Metropolitan Opera broadcasts every Saturday. All the Muni men sang, and all three boys would eventually become professional musicians: older brother Sam a conductor and younger brother Carmen a singer. (Both eventually went on to other professions.)

By age 16, Muni had studied with several individuals who recognized his gift and nurtured his burgeoning talent. "I got the reputation of a kind of singing prodigy in high school and started doing things outside of choir," he says. Each year the South Jersey Opera Festival would pick an opera and do a semi-staged version of its best-known arias. When he auditioned for *La Traviata* his junior year, he tried out for Alfredo, a tenor role, and Giorgio, a baritone

role. "As crazy as I was, they were crazier," Muni laughs. "I was selected to do both."

The next year he sang another vocal doubleheader as Mephistopheles and Valentin in the festival's production of *Faust*. That same year, his solos at a high school music contest received the highest marks of any singer in the state of New Jersey. His future looked bright, and it was time to choose a college.

Muni was accepted at Oberlin and Juilliard. He chose Oberlin because of its conservatory and its reputation as a great liberal arts college. Like the atmosphere at all top music schools, Oberlin's was very intense and very competitive. Although the flower power years were in full bloom and the Kent State shootings had created a radical climate on campus, Muni's focus didn't shift. "I got through those years without doing any experimentation with drugs," he says matter-of-factly. As a singer, Muni was "zooming ahead."

He studied with Richard Miller, a voice teacher he describes as "fantastic." The following summer Muni took part in a music festival put on by Temple University and

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took lessons from Todd Duncan, who'd premiered the role of Porgy. Summer lessons with Duncan became the major vocal influence during Muni's Oberlin years and for several years after college. It would also be Duncan who would change the course of Muni's musical life.

"My sophomore year, Miller took a sabbatical and was replaced by a teacher whose name I won't mention," he says. Suddenly Muni was confronted with a different technique and method of singing. "It was not a good thing for me, and it sent me down the wrong track vocally." When Muni returned to Duncan that summer, he was totally unprepared for what happened when he began to sing. "He crushed me when he said, 'what have you done to your voice?' I wasn't aware it sounded bad, and I didn't know what had happened." Duncan's star baritone was reduced to a student with a voice damaged to the master's ears.

"I recovered my voice, but my singing became highly technical, and I lost the natural flair of just singing," he says. "I made a pledge to myself that I would learn everything there was to know about how the voice functioned, but it created a crack inside of me. I never got back on track."

Years later, the pain of that experience became a plus when Muni began coaching young singers. "It's one thing to say, 'I think you're starting to do things that aren't good for your voice,' but what [that teacher] did [to me] was just irresponsible. I guess he thought I could handle it, but it did a lot of psychological damage. I've never done that to a student. I never will."

Although it wasn't apparent at the time, Muni was preparing for the future by directing several college productions. He'd also tried his hand at conducting. He enjoyed both, but still was convinced that his voice was his future.

ACT V

THE YEAR AFTER COLLEGE, Muni put his aspirations on the back burner. In New Jersey his mother was dying of cancer, and he returned home to help care for her. He commuted to Washington, D.C., for voice lessons with Duncan and did some work close to home. When his mother passed away, he moved to D.C.

"Washington was a very important time in my life," he says. He was conducting, directing opera and singing, and had joined an experimental theater lab. The acting

group was run by Tony Abeson and based on the work of Jerzy Grotowski, whose style of directing focused on the emotional connections among characters. Muni's work as an actor with that group would have a profound influence on his own work as a director. After two years in Washington, he headed to New York.

When a couple more years of sowing artistic wild oats had passed, Muni made some crucial decisions. "I slowly came to the realization that my voice was really more suited for recital work than opera. I didn't excel in power singing, and in that day, there was no such thing as a career recitalist. I was still doing a lot of different things artistically. I loved all of them, but I wasn't doing service to any of them." Muni was 26, and it was time to choose.

"I literally woke up one morning and said, I'm going to be an opera director, and that was it. I stopped everything else cold turkey." Luckily with that inner clarity came "tons of directing jobs" based on the work Muni had been doing with small opera companies. Over the next couple of years, as the '70s wound down, Muni continued to freelance as a director, working with small and regional opera companies throughout the East.

Then, in the early 1980s, two very important events took place: Thomson Smillie, general director of Kentucky Opera in Louisville, hired the young director to work with KO on a regular basis. From 1982 until 1987 Muni was Smiley's principal director. "It was a wonderful step forward for me. I had been doing a lot of conceptual work as a director, but this was the first time I was able to learn about the management of a company and have a decent budget to work with."

Muni's personal life was also on a roll. In 1980, while directing a production of *Hansel and Gretel* in Rochester, N.Y., he fell in love with a young mezzo-soprano who was making her professional debut.

ACT VI

ALTHOUGH THEORY SAYS opposites attract, it's common ground that keeps couples together long-term. Mari and Nicholas (as she prefers to call him) Muni love football, family, old houses and of course, opera. In November they will celebrate their 20th anniversary. Their two decades together have taken them from New York to Tulsa to Cincinnati. Home for the past seven years has been a large 1905 two-story

house in Clifton, where they live with their 14-year-old daughter, Jessica, and 7-year-old son, Nicholas Alexander.

Where Nic is reserved and chooses words carefully, Mari is quick to express a thought, often punctuated with a hearty laugh. Her vocal career has taken a backseat to the responsibilities of motherhood. "Kids always come first," she says. Today she occasionally performs roles at Sorg Opera in Middletown and gives recitals at Miami University, where she is an associate professor of voice. One afternoon in early March, Mari offers a tour of the house shortly after arriving home from Oxford.

Lots of rich, dark woodwork give the rooms an arts-and-crafts feel. "It's a great party house," Mari says, pointing out how each room flows into the next through wide doorways. It's also Nic's laboratory for home renovation. Since moving in, he's built a deck, added a wall, redesigned a doorway and stairway landing and is into year two of turning the basement into a guest apartment, exercise room and laundry.

At the back of the first floor is a family room, added on by a previous owner. Unlike the rest of the downstairs, which is filled with family heirlooms and antique purchases, this space has contemporary furnishings and is all about sanctuary. To watch a harried Nic sink into the cushy sofa and allow his body to sprawl is to witness a rare occurrence: Muni at rest. With its 36-inch TV, this is also the place where Mari and Nic share common interests and guilty pleasures: pro football, *Joe Millionaire*, *The Bachelor*, *The Practice* and *Survivor*. Of course, reality TV could be considered homework, given Nic's penchant for exploring emotional minefields.

"I think he thinks about music all the time," Mari says with mock sarcasm. "When he's on the exercise bike, when he's doing one of the renovation projects around here. He dreams about opera."

"Not as much as I used to," Nic counters meekly. Feeling the need for a bit of justification, he adds, "Opera has served as my means of learning about the world. I do a lot of research when I'm working on an opera, learning about the time, what was going on in the composer's and author's lives," which means that any circumstances and surroundings can suddenly become a classroom.

"On our honeymoon, we went to Rome," Mari says, rolling her eyes. "Nic was [going to be] directing *Tosca* [set in

Rome]. We had to go to every site that was in the opera, and Nic actually ran the route that [character] Angelotti would have run."

There was also a trip to Maine a few years into their marriage. Living in New York had exhausted them, and the two headed for a rustic cabin in the Maine woods. Nearly two decades later, Nic and Mari recall it as the ultimate getaway.

It's also the place Nic's mind goes when the conversation returns to his work and the question: Is there is an ultimate project he'd like to direct?

FINAL SCENE

"I'M SO GLAD YOU ASKED that," Muni says, practically beaming. "I want to assemble a cast for *Magic Flute* and take them to Maine for three or four months and structure our lives based on the hierarchy of the roles." In other words, put the singers in a setting as close to the lifestyle of 18th-century Seville as possible, with servants and masters and no central heating, running water or electricity. It's reality rehearsing à la Muni. Cost-wise, it would take something like a Guggenheim grant to pull off.

At the moment there is a more pressing monetary challenge looming—a capital campaign. It is only the second capital campaign in Cincinnati Opera's 83-year history. The exact amount will be determined this summer, but the future of Cincinnati Opera as envisioned by Muni, the trustees and administration is riding on its success. "It's a commitment to the fundamental goals of our long-range plan," Muni says, which translates to three main issues: maintaining artistic excellence, expanding festival weekends, and renovating Music Hall's north wing for the company's new home, the Corbett Opera Center. Keeping pace with the first two is critical to keeping the rest of the opera world tuned to what's happening here. That process hit high notes last year when writers and reviewers from around the country descended on Cincinnati for the *Elektra/Dead Man Walking* festival weekend.

Writer Rebecca Paller was here for the Metropolitan Opera's monthly journal, *Opera News*. "Honestly, *Elektra* is not a favorite opera of mine, but when I saw Nic's production, it shed new light on the psychology of the characters and the whole inner life thing came alive for me." Paller admits surprise at how well Muni has

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been received by local audiences. "If you had told me that [the opera] *Jenůfa* would be greeted with the kind of enthusiasm in Cincinnati that it received in 1998, I never would have believed it," Paller says. "That's when I started paying attention to what was happening in Cincinnati. Nic is proving he's right up there with any artistic director internationally. I'd love to see more of his work in New York." Which of course, begs another question: How long does he plan to stay?

"My contract runs through 2005," he says, pausing for a few seconds, then directing his response to a more cosmic question: Why is he here? "At this moment, I'm learning to navigate a challenging time. We've been on a steep growth curve and now there's a downturn because of the economy. It's a collision of aspirations and reality. Some things may have to happen more slowly than planned."

Perhaps, but news bites coming out of Music Hall in the past few months bode well for CO's future: the 2005 premiere of *Margaret Garner*, an opera co-commissioned by the company in honor of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center; a \$350,000 grant from the City of Cincinnati at the end of April to help with the cost of the new offices, and the world premiere this summer of *Medusa*, the third in the trilogy of one-act operas. Back in the conference room at Music Hall, Muni permits a smile of satisfaction to spread across his face. "Medusa is a brand new 21st-century opera, and probably the best opera text I've ever read."

All three one-acts will take place on the same set designed by Dany Lyne, who created last year's *Elektra* set. A minimal amount of props and lighting designed by another favorite collaborator, Thomas C. Hace, will transform the space from a highway in Act I to a series of U.S. cities in Act II to Act III's rocky crag. "It's all going to be very challenging for the audience," Muni says, moving the figures and tiny props around on the model. "These operas are a commentary on American culture. We're dealing with how technology affects intimacy, cultural icons, reality TV, greed, all the foibles of modern society, and that idea, be careful what you wish for."

And where will Muni be when the curtain goes up? "I will be watching the audience," he says slyly. "There's something unexpected that happens [immediately] in Act I. I can't wait to see the reaction."



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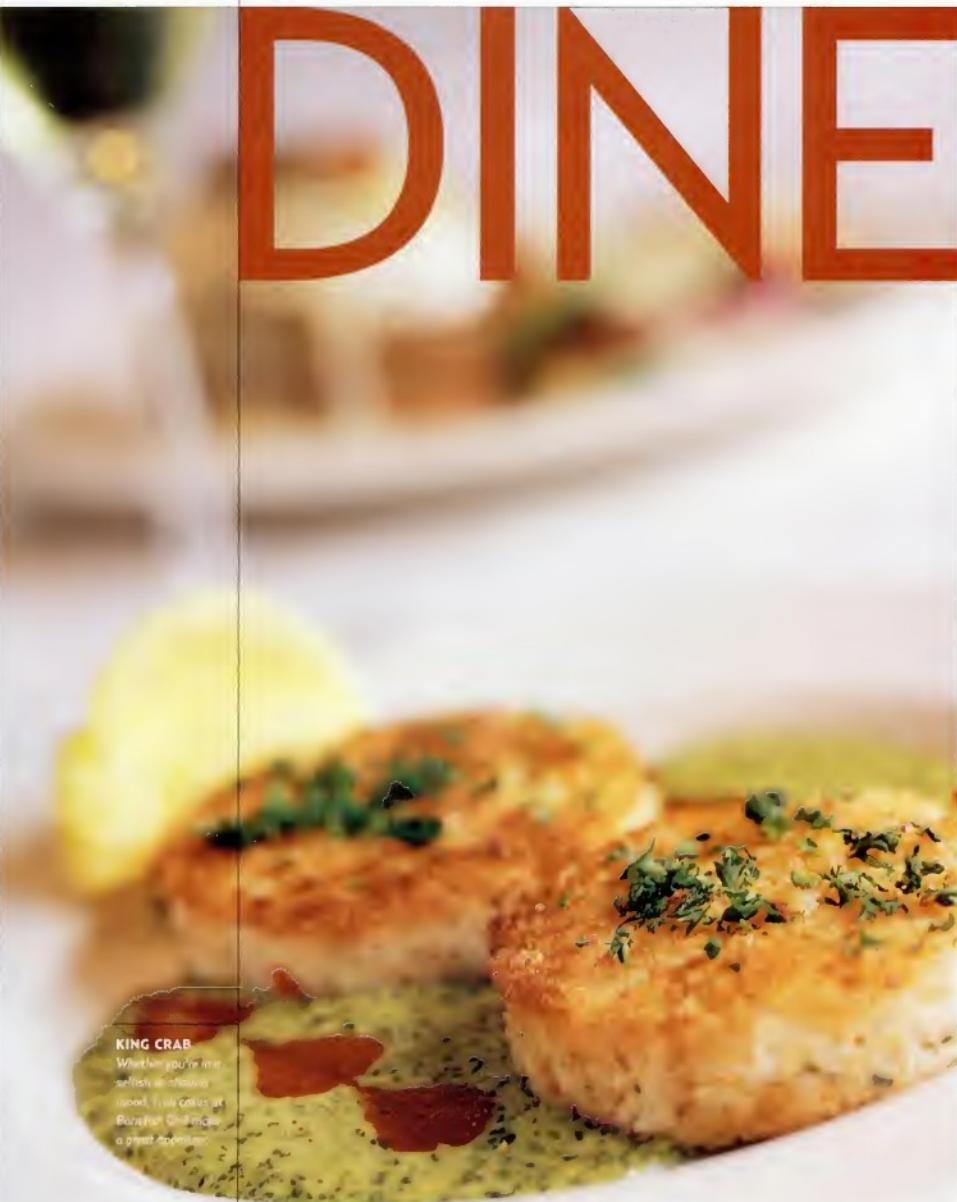
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Buzz Words

*Hyde Park's Bonefish Grill
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At a party not long ago, someone asked the group at large, "Have you been to Bonefish Grill?" The room immediately filled with sound, everyone talking at once. One friend raved about the long, European-style communal tables in the bar area and how fun it was to eat dinner there. Another described the restaurant's attractive digs, awed that the space once housed a Perkins. Everyone in the room had been—or wanted to go—to this new place in Hyde Park.

Buzz is everything in the restaurant business, and Bonefish has it big. The restaurant belongs to a corporate chain, and its launch here was accompanied by appropriately corporate press releases meant to jump-start the b-word. But the buzz about Bonefish is genuine; people truly like the place and want to recommend it. And no doubt sincere buzz is the most effective kind. Witness the long waiting list for dinner at Bonefish every night of the week.

Inside, the place is handsome in an upscale-Florida kind of way. Here's the handsome: The restaurant is one-third bar, which features several tall, communal tables, all masculine with burnished wood. Across the way, a bank of booths makes up the smoking section. On the other side of a partition is the dining room, somewhat dark despite colorful hanging blown-glass lights, with a black ceiling and brushed terra-cotta walls. And here's the upscale-Florida: Wrought-iron mangrove sculptures set in arched openings in the restaurant's partition and an artistically rendered chart of the Florida Keys made of metal and backlit against Bonefish's rear dining room wall. It's much more subtle than the Florida hawked by orange growers—tropical, but restrained.

The location is perfect. Bonefish sits on the corner of Madison and Edwards roads, on the heavily beaten path from the interstate to the manicured lawns of Hyde Park and fixer-uppers in Oakley. Accordingly, that's just who you'll find inside: Hyde Park families at dinner and young Oakley singles at the bar. The singles scene is so strong here that Bonefish completes a kind of Bermuda Triangle of Cincinnati dating: In addition to Teller's and the Pub at Rookwood Mews, Bonefish is a place where young prospects walk in single, only to quickly disappear from the dating radar.

BY DAWN SIMONDS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN KURTZ

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PRICES

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SERVICE

Don't be fooled—the boy bussing your dishes is not a chef. Chef's whites are de rigueur here. This does not warrant mockery, however, because the service is quite good.

RESERVATIONS

If you call early enough, you can get one of a small group of tables available for reservation. Otherwise, just show up. You may prefer eating in the bar anyway.

FLORIDA ROOM

The original Bonefish, located in Tampa, provides inspiration for the decor. Mangrove sculptures form a screen between the bar and the dining room.

The restaurant's strongest suit is service. On my first visit, our server was the handsome, overconfident type, and if there were a Myers-Briggs indicator for waiting tables, he'd rate off the charts. Not only did he know the menu to the last detail, he spoke to our table as food lover to food lovers, conjuring irresistible descriptions. Other staff members were equally adept that night, and on a second visit, too. A busboy dressed in snappy chef's whites wished us a nice evening as he helped my sundae-sticky daughter out of a booth.

Such service from a large chain is a pleasant surprise. It turns out that like the decor, much of Bonefish's staff has been plucked from Florida's finest. The original Bonefish in Tampa was so successful that Outback Steakhouse bought it and duplicated the concept around the state. With 12 Bonefish restaurants in Florida, Outback now cherry-picks seasoned staff to open new outlets, including the locations in Hyde Park and Crescent Springs, Ky. Buzz can't help but follow.

The food gets the same deft touch, especially when it comes to fresh vegetables and fish. Mahi mahi, trout, grouper, ahi tuna—the offerings are many, each wood-grilled and served with a slather of lemon butter, lime-tomato-garlic sauce or mango salsa. The mahi mahi was fresh, firm and mild, the tart sweetness of chunky mango salsa a perfect foil. Several specials are offered nightly, and I tried swordfish with a felicitous ladle of creamy lobster thermidor sauce. Not overly rich, the seafood-flavored sauce was laced with succulent chunks of lobster meat. Both the mahi mahi and the swordfish were wonderful.

Many people dine in the bar, and you would do fine here to simply order first courses over drinks. What sticks in my memory: shrimp with a crust of long, fresh shreds of coconut with a horseradish-spiced orange marmalade and a mound of fried calamari cooked satisfyingly crunchy outside and steamy-tender inside. But the best appetizer is an insider favorite—"bang bang shrimp." Breaded and fried rock shrimp are tossed with a spicy-sweet sauce and





rushed to the table. A special, this appetizer isn't on the menu, but it's so addictive it should be. A couple next to me at the bar inhaled an entire dish of them in the time it took me to say "lemon drop martini."

I rarely bother to ask the market price of lobster in a restaurant (why be tempted?), but when I discovered a tail was less than \$20, I went for it. The tail wasn't huge, but who'd be so gullible to think it would be?

Each entree comes with a generous accompaniment of sautéed vegetables—a crisp mix of zucchini, yellow squash, red onion and baby green beans—and a fresh salad. What the

menu calls "awesome side dishes" aren't up to the hype; angel hair pasta with marinara on a seafood menu is just a bad idea, and potatoes au gratin should be relegated to the sideboard at holiday buffets. If you must have a carbohydrate to round out your meal, try the island rice. Or fast-forward to the macadamia nut brownie for dessert.

I'm looking forward to returning here. Perhaps with family, or just with my husband, or maybe with a group of girlfriends. Bonefish is that kind of restaurant, one that can be most things to most people—and make them feel good about it. That's why the buzz is on. ☀

TUNA SURPRISE

The Bonnefish version of ahi tuna sashimi, served with wasabi and pickled ginger.

RESTAURANTS

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★—Critic Dawn Simonds's Pick

american

ARNOLD'S, 210 E. Eighth St., 421-6234. Oldest tavern in continuous operation in the city. Features American traditional and Italian fare, \$6-\$11. Courtyard open year-round. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner & live music Tues-Sat. MCC. ★

ARTHUR'S, 3516 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, 871-5543. Neighborhood cafe, antique bar, garden. Burgers, salads, soups and sandwiches, \$5-\$11. Full bar. Happy hour Mon-Fri 4-7. Lunch & dinner seven days. Breakfast Sun. MCC.

BAXTER'S EATERY & SALOON, 4858 Cooper Rd., Blue Ash, 791-2223. Pastas, handcut steaks, fresh fish. \$8-\$16. Sandwiches, stews, pasta for lunch, \$5-\$8. Outdoor dining. Full bar. Martini Club—from Cosmopolitan to Cuban. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC.

BEHLE STREET CAFE, 50 E. Rivercenter Blvd., Covington, (859) 291-4100. Upbeat, young crowd. Pastas, ribs, pork chops and salads, \$6-\$22. Children's menu. Banquet facilities. Lunch & dinner, seven days. MCC.

BISTRO AT HARPER'S, 11384 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., 489-9777. Classic American cuisine with entrees topping out at \$15. Full bar, outdoor dining. Dinner seven days, call for lunch hours. Reservations accepted. MCC.

BRANDYWINE INN, 204 S. Main St., Monroe, 539-8911. If no answer call 779-4747. Filet mignon, seafood, prix fixe four-course dinner, \$14-\$25. Thurs-Sat 6-9. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Cash, checks.

BROWN DOG CAFE, 5893 Pfeiffer Rd., Blue Ash, 794-1610. Casually upscale. Grilled seafood, meats, pastas, \$14-\$22. Lunch \$5-\$12. Full bar. Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Tues-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

CHAMPS SPORTS BAR, at the Hyatt Regency Cincinnati, 151 W. 5th St., 579-1234. American cuisine featuring seafood, steaks and "Pastabilities": choose from 25 ingredients to create your dream pasta dish, \$9-\$18. Full bar. Lunch & dinner 7 days. MCC.

COUGH CROSSINGS, 6892 Clough Pike, 624-7800. American cuisine in casual setting. Features almond crusted salmon, pan roasted chicken, Cajun seafood fettuccine, \$7-\$19. Outdoor courtyard dining. Full bar. Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. MCC, DS.

COCO'S, 322 Greenup St., Covington, (859) 491-1369. In historic Riverside district. Seafood, pastas, beef and poultry, \$7-\$20. Full bar. Live music Fri-Sat, dinner Tues-Sat, bar seven days 4-2:30 am. MCC, V.

COURTYARD CAFE, 1211 Main St., Over-the-Rhine, 723-1119. Burgers, soups and appetizers, \$4.50-\$7. Daily lunch specials. Happy hour Mon-Fri. Valet parking. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

DAVEED'S, 934 Hatch St., Mt. Adams, 721-2665. American cuisine with ethnic flair. Duck breast, pan-seared NY state Bo Bo Farms foie gras de canard, \$20-\$29. Full bar. Wines carefully paired with the food. Dressy casual. Dinner Tues-Sat. MCC. ★

DAYBREAK, 3810 Paxton Ave., Hyde Park Plaza Shopping Center, 871-4400. Breakfast, brunch and lunch fare includes award-winning stuffed French toast, spinach omelets, quiche and the unique Smartini smoothie, \$3.50-\$7.25. Breakfast, brunch & lunch 7 days. MCC.

DESHA'S AMERICAN TAVERN, 11320 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., 247-9933. Lodge/resort ambience. Features roasted pork tenderloin, chicken and beef and plenty of comfort foods, \$7-\$23. Wine list, imported draft beer and plenty of single-barrel bourbon. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days, Sun brunch. Reservations suggested. MCC.

ENCORE CAFE, 7305 Tyler's Corner Dr., West Chester, 759-0200. Paul and Pam Starkey offer pastas, steak, seafood and fire-grilled pizzas, \$7-\$25. Children's menu. Full bar. Reservations recommended at lunch. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. Banquets. MCC.

FIRST WATCH, 2692 Madison Rd., Norwood, 531-7430; 700 Walnut St., downtown, 721-4744; 8118 Montgomery Rd., Madeira, 891-0088; 11301 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., 489-6849; 80 W. Kemper Rd., Springfield, 671-1740. Nonstoping breakfast and lunch spot. Pancakes, omelets and specialty egg dishes. Also sandwiches, salads, soups, \$3-\$57. Children's menu. Seven days. MCC.

GEOFFREY'S, 5880 Cheviot Rd., White Oak, 385-9999. American cuisine. Smothered chicken, fresh seafood, Santa Fe Sirlion, burgers and salads, \$6.50-\$13. Children's menu. Full bar.

Lunch & dinner seven days. Reservations for large parties. MCC.

THE GOLDEN LAMB, 27 S. Broadway, Lebanon (513) 932-5065. Housed in Ohio's oldest inn. Roast duckling, lamb, fresh seafood, steaks and prime rib, \$12-\$22. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days, breakfast Sat-Sun. MCC. ★

GRAND FINALE, Sharon Rd. and Congress Ave., Glendale, 771-5925. Rated three stars by Mobil Travel Guide. Contemporary American cuisine. Chicken ginger, rack of lamb, steak and seafood, \$13-\$20. Children's menu. Garden courtyard open year-round. Full bar. Lunch Tues-Sat, dinner Tues-Sun. Sun brunch 10:30-3. No reservations Sat. MCC.

GREYHOUND TAVERN, 2500 Dixie Hwy., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 331-3767. Popular neighborhood spot features Southern-fried chicken, chops, prime beef and seafood, \$5.50-\$21. Children's menu. Outside dining. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days, Sun brunch. Reservations suggested. MCC.

HENKE WINERY, 3077 Harrison Ave., Westwood, 662-WINE (9463). Owners Joan & Joe Henke make 11 varieties of wine and offer wine dinners, pizzas and hors d'oeuvres, \$6.50-\$17. Dinner Mon-Sat, closed holidays. DS, MC, V.

THE HERITAGE, 7664 Wooster Pk., East of Mariemont, 561-9300. Regional American food in an 1827 roadhouse. Features naturally raised, local meats and produce, fresh seafood, \$15-\$27. Reservations suggested. Stein & Vine Pub serves salads, sandwiches, Kentucky hot brown, \$5-\$11. Children's menu. More than 100 beers, wines by the glass. Patio. Full bar. Live music Wed & Thurs. Dinner seven days, brunch Sun 10:30-2, MCC.

IRON HORSE INN, 40 Village Square, Glendale, 771-4787. Prime beef, fresh fish, creative pastas and vegetarian specialties, \$9-\$23. Homemade desserts and breads. Valet parking. Live jazz Fri-Sat. Full bar. Dinner seven days, Sun brunch. Available for private luncheons. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

J. ALEXANDER'S, 2629 Edmondson Rd., Norwood, 531-7495. Contemporary American food in Craftsman-style dining room. Specialties include smoked salmon dip, prime rib, grilled chop, \$12-\$22. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days, MCC, DC.

KALDI'S, 1204 Main St., Over-the-Rhine, 241-3070. Features sandwiches, salads, light entrées, specialty coffees and desserts \$5-\$8. Live music four nights a week. Full bar. Used books for sale, monthly art shows. Lunch & dinner seven days, Sun brunch. DS, MC, V. ★

LA NORMANDIE, 118 E. Sixth St., 721-2761. Features steaks, fresh fish, rack of lamb, \$14-\$35. Daily specials with sauces made by the Maisonette kitchen upstairs. Full bar. Valet parking. Happy hour Mon-Fri 4-6. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC.

MAIN STREET CAFE, 6903 Main St., Newtown, 272-1339. Friendly neighborhood cafe offers burgers, chili, soups, salads, \$3-\$8.50. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MC, V.



weeknight

Siam Orchid, 8254 Alexandria Pike, Alexandria, (859) 694-7700

No. 1 reason to visit Siam Orchid in Alexandria? Chicken satay—strips of white meat chicken skewered and marinated in curry, grilled and served with plenty of crunchy crushed peanuts and sweet peanut sauce.

But don't leave after eating just this first course. Siam Orchid's vaulted dining room lined with cozy booths is comfy enough for a full meal. Pad Thai lovers won't be disappointed in a plateful of transparent rice noodles loaded with hot chunks of moist chicken, green onions and crisp white bean sprouts. Eggplant pork is a colorful, tasty stir fry of sliced pork, eggplant, red peppers and carrots laced with bright green, fragrant basil leaves. Best of all, pineapple shrimp curry is a bargain. Loaded with tiger shrimp and fresh pineapple, simmered in red curry sauce and sprinkled with shredded lime leaves, it's just \$9.25.

Don't be fooled into thinking Siam Orchid is closed. You'll need to use the side entrance until owner Wera Fong Bumru gets his front entryway repaired.

• MARY KURTZ

FYI Tues—Thurs 11 am–2:30 pm and 4–9 pm, Fri 11–2:30 and 4–9:30, Sat 3–9:30, Sun 11–2:30 and 4–9. First courses \$2.50–\$5, entrees \$7.50–\$9.50

MANHATTAN WEST, 6041 Montgomery Rd., Pleasant Ridge, 531-7222. Bright, spacious, nonsmoking. Soul food—fried chicken, baked ham, stuffed pork chops, meat loaf, \$6.50–\$20. Full bar. Lunch Wed–Fri, dinner Wed–Sun. Reservations for five or more. MCC.

MONTY'S GRILLE, at the Four Points Sheraton, 8020 Montgomery Rd., Kenwood, 793-4300. Features New York strip, chicken, prime rib and fish entrees, \$10–\$14. Plus burgers, salads and sandwiches. Full bar. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

NATIONAL EXEMPLAR, in the Mariemont Inn, 6880 Wooster Pke., Mariemont, 271-2103. Great breakfasts—oversized omelets and pancakes. Steaks, fresh seafood and pastas for dinner \$8–\$21. Children's menu. Two full bars. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. Weekend reservations suggested. MCC.

THE ORIGINAL PANCAKE HOUSE, 9977 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, 745-0555. Worth the wait for the wonderful oven-baked specialties, including apple pancakes, "Dutch Baby" German pancakes and omelets, waffles, crepes, \$4–\$8. Children's menu. Lunch Mon–Fri, breakfast seven days. MCC.

THE PALACE, at the Cincinnati Hotel, 601 Vine St., 381-6006. Elegant. Received top ranking in Zagat Survey for its new American cuisine. Cricket Lounge offers lighter lunch and evening fare. Valet parking. Piano, Mon–Wed, jazz trio Fri–Sat. Full bar. Breakfast seven days, lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

THE PALM COURT RESTAURANT & BAR, at Hilton Netherland Plaza, 35 W. Fifth St., 564-6465. A three diamond AAA restaurant featuring seafood dishes, prime rib, \$10–\$35, plus salads, vegetarian and pasta entrees. Full bar includes extensive wine list. Valet parking. Piano music Fri–Sat, jazz trio Fri–Sat. Reservations suggested. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days, Sun brunch. MCC. ☀

PALOMINO RESTAURANT, ROTISSERIA & BAR, Fountain Place, 505 Vine St., 381-1300. Casually upscale setting, with a view of Fountain Square. Food is regional American inspired by rustic European; also oven-roasted and white-oak grilled prawns, salmon and certified Angus beef. Lunch from \$8, dinner \$12–\$29. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

PROMONTORY, 1111 Saint Gregory St., Mt. Adams, 651-4777. Modern American cuisine. Specialties include veal meat loaf, mustard-herb roasted salmon and nightly specials, \$10–\$23. Full bar. Live jazz Thurs–Sat. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

THE RESTAURANT AT THE PHOENIX, 812 Race St., 721-8901. Creative cuisine in a beautifully restored landmark. Top-ranked in the Zagat Survey. Valet parking. Full bar. Dinner Weds–Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC, DS. ★

ROOKWOOD POTTERY BISTRO, 1077 Celestial St., Mt. Adams, 721-5456. Dine in the kilns. Steaks, pasta, seafood, salads, \$6–\$19.50. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

THE SILVER SPRING HOUSE, 8322 E. Kemper Rd., Montgomery, 489-7044. Burgers, burritos, seafood and salads, \$3.25–\$15. Specialty citrus-marinated Amish chicken. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

STURKEY'S, 400 Wyoming Ave., Wyoming, 821-9200. Casually upscale restaurant features grilled salmon with leek and watercress, and Bailey's chocolate cheesecake cake, \$7.50–\$25. Rec-

ognized by USA Today as a top midwestern restaurant. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days. MCC. ★

SYMPHONY HOTEL, 210 W. 14th St., Over-the-Rhine, 721-3353. Housed in the 1871 Erholt mansion. Offers four-course dinners for Cincinnati Symphony and Cincinnati Opera performances and three-course dinners for Pops performances, \$35. 5:30 seating, dinner at 6. MCC.

THROUGH THE GARDEN, 10738 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, 791-2199. Pasta, grilled seafood, burgers, stir-fries, New York strip steak, \$5-\$15. Jazz trio Sat. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.
TOOT'S, 12191 Montgomery Rd., Loveland, 697-9100. Sports-oriented with 14 TVs. Chicken, ribs and seafood, up to \$11. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

TRIO, 7565 Kenwood Rd., Kenwood, 984-1905. Serves California-style pizzas and pastas, salads, sandwiches, and entrees, \$8-\$14. Children's menu. More than 200 wines. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

VINOKLET WINERY, 11069 Colerain Ave., Dunlap, 385-9309. Bright, beautiful dining overlooking the vineyard. Children's menu. Strolling violin Fri-Sat. Wine tastings daily 5-8. Available for parties. Two seatings Fri & Sat (5-8:30), Sun (2-7); light specials Wed 5-9; buffet (chicken or fish, \$24). Reservations required. MCC.

THE VINEYARD CAFE & WINE ROOM, 2653 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 871-6167. Elliot Jablonosky's cafe features light, creative American dishes with Mediterranean and Asian accents, \$8-\$20. Full

bar and wine room features extensive wine list. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

WATSON BROS. BISTRO & BREWPUB, 4785 Lake Forest Dr., Blue Ash, 563-9797. Brewpub offers fresh catch daily, steaks, pastas, \$8-\$25. Children's menu. Large outdoor dining area. Full bar plus handcrafted ales. Lunch & dinner seven days, Sun brunch. Weekday reservations. MCC.

THE WHITE HOUSE INN, 4940 Muhlhauser Rd., West Chester, 860-1110. Heartland cooking includes chicken, Kansas City strip sirloin and chops, \$12.50-\$20. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

YORK STREET CAFE, 738 York St., Newport, (859) 261-9675. Owners Terry & Betsy Cunningham serve steaks, seafood, ethnic & vegetarian specialties, \$9-\$22. Large garden patio. Live music Fri-Sat. Comedy Wed. Swing Thurs. Full bar. Lunch Tues-Sat, dinner Tues-Sun. MCC.

ZEBO'S BISTRO, in the Cincinnati Marriott Rivercenter, 110 W. Rivercenter Blvd., Covington, (859) 392-3750. Overlooks the river, features regional American cuisine, including New York strip, pork chops, three kinds of fish, \$14-\$22. Full bar. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

african

THE EAST AFRICAN RESTAURANT, 6025 Montgomery Rd., Pleasant Ridge, 351-7686. Authentic Ethiopian and Eritrean cuisine in family setting. Features beef, lamb and chicken stews on injera bread. Vegetarian items available, \$5.50-\$7.50. Dinner Tues-Sat. Cash.

barbecue

BBQ REVUE, 4725 Madison Rd., Madisonville, 871-3500. Authentic atmosphere makes take our a shanty in the neighborhood staple. Smoked ribs and whole chickens, pork loin and brisket, \$4-\$16. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues-Sun. MCC. ©

GOODIES SOUTHERN-STYLE BARBECUE, INC., 5841 Hamilton Ave., College Hill, 542-4663. Finger lickin' ribs served with collard greens, potato salad and cole slaw. Plus chicken wings and sandwiches, \$1.69-\$16. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

FAMOUS DAVE'S, 12183 Springfield Pike, Springdale, 671-7427. Northwoods barbecue in kitschy roadhouse atmosphere. Ribs, chicken, brisket and traditional sides, \$6-\$19. Full bar. Children's menu. Lunch and dinner seven days. MCC.

PIT TO PLATE, 1527 Compton Rd., Mt. Healthy, 931-9100. Authentic Texas barbecue-smoked barbecue. Beef brisket, ribs and chicken, traditional sides and homemade desserts, \$4.50-\$17. Lunch and dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

cajun/caribbean

ALVIN'S CAFE, 3538 Columbia Pkwy., Columbia-Tusculum, 871-5779. Fun, funky. Features Cajun, Mexican, seafood and steaks, \$5-\$19. Shoppe with more than 180 wines, 80 beers & international foods. Live music four nights. Bar till 2:30 am, weekdays till 12. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

BAHAMA BREEZE, 325 N. Commerce Way, Springdale, 671-1488. Caribbean-themed spot offers en-

IF OUR PRIME RIB DOESN'T GET YOU, THE WINE FLIGHTS WILL.

If you love great prime rib, this is your place. It's our specialty, Angus beef slow roasted for tenderness and seasoned with our own special herbs, served au jus. Try it with horseradish and your choice of redskin mashed potatoes, French fries or baked potato.

To compliment your meal, we have four wonderful wine flights where you



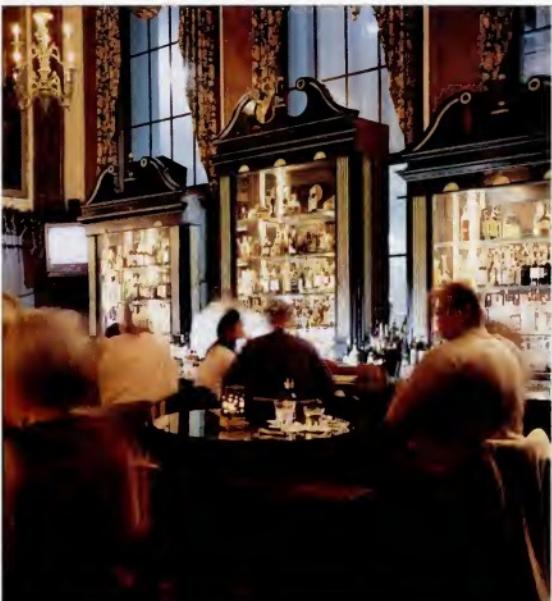
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The refurbishing of Fourth Street continues with the fabulous, handsome Federal Reserve Piano Bar. Since opening in November, the former bank's main chamber—with 30-foot ceilings and enormous, sparkling windows—has filled each night with Cincinnati execs decompressing after work and glamorous couples beginning a night on the town. Most evenings, Billy Larkin or another jazz pianist sits center stage, tinkling the keys of a grand piano. The menu of light fare features indulgent nibbles like king crab cocktail and desserts. ■ *Wade Schuster*

FYI Mon–Sat 4 pm–2 am. Crab cake \$9.25, beef carpaccio \$8.75, crème brûlée \$5.50, bananas foster \$5.50

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fine diving

The H&H Grill, 3753 Montgomery Rd., Norwood, (513) 531-9696

I'd almost given up on finding the lost civilization of Norwood—the Norwood before young professionals discovered cheap houses close to downtown, when this was still a GM town—when I broke for lunch at the H&H Grill. The stone exterior was authentic, laid with those hewn slabs that bad Frank Lloyd Wright imitators were so fond of in the mid '50s. This was promising.

Inside I found knotty pine walls actually cut with routers here in America. Dangling against the honey shellac were bad prints of country landscapes. I hoped for a velvet Elvis, but you can't be too picky. What really caught my eye was the dishware lunch was served on: melamine. Once the plate of choice at school lunchrooms across America, it's since been replaced by Styrofoam. But here I was eating candied yams off the genuine article.

This was how old Norwood lived: a ham in the slicing rack, biscuits and gravy for \$1.95, liver and onions, kraut and metts, kale and pinto beans, cake and pie. They ate well. Turns out they still do. The denizens of old Norwood are still here.

Oh, Dr. Leakey, if you had been so lucky! They're wearing vintage "America, Love it or Leave it" ball caps, eating fish sandwiches and chili, open-face roast beef and mashed potatoes with sides of beets and succotash. And they still won't take a bill larger than a \$20. As Indiana Jones once said, "This place belongs in a museum snack bar." Maybe I paraphrased that.

FYI Breakfast is served 5-11 am Mon-Fri. They close for the day at 2:30 pm.

trees such as jerk chicken pasta, black pepper seared fresh tuna, ropa vieja, \$6-\$17. Children's menu. Full bar. Live music seven days. Dinner seven days, noon on Sunday. MCC.

COPELAND'S OF NEW ORLEANS, 5150 Merten Rd., Deerfield Twp., 336-0043. New Orleans-style dishes, including shrimp etouffee, blackened redfish and creole, plus sandwiches, \$7-\$19. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch and dinner seven days, Sun brunch. MCC, DS.

DEE FELICE CAFE, 529 Main St., Covington, (859) 261-2365. New Orleans cuisine: barbecue shrimp, file gumbo and jambalaya, \$16-\$23. Live music seven days. Happy hour Sun-Fri 4-7. Full bar. Dinner seven days, brunch Sun. Reservations suggested. MCC. *

KNOTTY PINE ON THE BAYOU, 1802 Licking Pke., Cold Spring, (859) 781-2200. Specializes in Cajun foods, such as blackened chicken, halibut and steaks, frog legs, oysters, shrimp and lobster, \$9-\$19. Children's menu. Full bar. Dinner Tues-Sun. Reservations suggested. MC, V.

REDFISH LOOZIANA ROADHOUSE, 700 Race St., 929-4700. Specializes in Louisiana-style dishes such as jambalaya, blackened prime rib, fresh fish, \$8-\$20. Children's menu. Full bar. Live blues Fri-Sat. Valet Fri & Sat nights. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC.

celtic

THE CLADDAGH IRISH PUB, 1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 581-8888. Traditional Irish fare including fish and chips, shepherd's pie and Guinness Irish stew (\$7-\$24). Patio dining with a great view of Cincinnati and the Ohio river. Live music Wed-Thurs. Two full bars. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

THE DUBLINER, 6111 Montgomery Rd., Pleasant Ridge, 531-6111. Irish pub offers steak, fresh seafood and Irish dishes, \$7-\$18. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Live music Wed-Sat. Full bar, with 16 beers on tap. Lunch & dinner seven days. Sun brunch. MCC.

JACK QUINN'S RESTAURANT & IRISH PUB, 122 E. Fourth St., Covington, (859) 491-6699. Seriously Irish—Guinness beef boxtty, shepherd's pie, \$7-\$22. Full bar. Live music weekends. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

NICHOLSON'S TAVERN & PUB, 625 Walnut St., 564-9111. Scottish-themed restaurant offers Shepherd's pie, hickory-smoked haddock, rotisserie-roasted chicken, Atlantic salmon with kedgeree risotto, \$4.50-\$27. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Plenty of beers and single-malt scotches. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

THE PUB AT ROOKWOOD MEWS, 2692 Madison Rd., at the entrance of Rookwood Commons, 841-2748. A high energy British pub featuring classic pub fare from around the British empire, \$6-\$15. Full bar, including imported ales and spirits. Lunch Fri-Sun, dinner seven days. MCC.

chinese

CHINA GOURMET, 3340 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 871-6612. Award-winning Cantonese and Szechuan specialties in contemporary decor. Trout in Szechuan sauce, Szechuan string beans and hot/sour soup, \$6-\$28. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC. *

DOODLES, 3443 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, 871-7388. Oodles of noodles and dumplings, including leek potstickers, seafood noodle bowl, noodles tossed with shrimp and scallion pancakes, \$5-\$16. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.



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*"One cannot think well, love well,
sleep well, if one has not dined well."*
— Virginia Woolf

*"The finer one's dining experience,
the finer one thinks, loves and sleeps."*

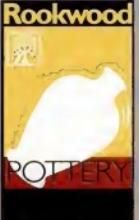
— Chef Vick Silberberg

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DINE

GRAND ORIENTAL, 4800 Fields-Ertel Rd. (Kings Automall), Deerfield Twp., 677-3388. Popular with families. Serves Cantonese, Hunan and Szechuan, \$7.75-\$18.50. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. MCC.

HOUSE OF TAM, 889 W. Galbraith Rd., Finneytown, 729-5566. Serves Hunan, Szechuan, including fresh seafood such as salmon with ginger and scallions and lemon shrimp with walnuts, \$6-\$19. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC.

JOHNNY CHAN 2, 11296 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., 489-2388. Szechuan, Hunan and Cantonese cuisine, \$5.75-\$16. Lunch buffet, sushi bar, banquet menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

LU LU'S NOODLES, 135 W. Kemper Rd., Springdale, 671-4949. Specializes in Asian noodles—from Hong Kong to Vietnamese, \$4-\$8. Non-smoking. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. Cash or checks.

MOY MOY'S, 9797 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, 792-9779. Kim Moy offers stir-fries, low-fat entrees, vegetarian items and daily lunch specials \$5-\$11. Nonsmoking. Delivery. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, dinner Sun. MCC.

P.F. CHANG'S CHINA BISTRO, 2633 Edmondson Rd., Norwood, 531-4567. Upscale yet casual Chinese. Entrees include garlic noodles, orange peel shrimp, Szechuan chicken chow fun and mongolian beef, \$7-\$18. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

PACIFIC MOON CAFE, 8300 Market Place Ln., Montgomery, 891-0091. Menus features Thai, Vietnamese, Chinese and a few American entrees, \$5.50-\$37. Patio dining, limited delivery area. Live jazz Sat. Full bar, extensive wine list. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. Dim sum Sun-Sun 10-3. Reservations encouraged. MCC. ☀

SHANGHAI MAMAS, 216 E. 6th St., Downtown, 241-7777, 1920-style noodle shop is open for late night dining until 3 am. Noodle bowls, rice bowls, Shanghai flatbread, \$5-\$10. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Cash.

UNCLE YIP'S FUSION CUISINE, 2175 A Dixie Hwy., Fairfield, 942-6512. Contemporary Asian cuisine. Lobster, steak, poached salmon and chicken, \$9-\$21. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues-Sun. Reservations accepted. MCC.

eclectic

AIOLI, 700 Elm St., downtown, 929-0525. Contemporary seasonal cuisine. Sandwiches (crab cake with Asian slaw) and salads for lunch (\$5-\$11); dinner entrees include sesame-crusted seared tuna, \$14-\$24. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. MCC. ★

AMERETTA CAFE, 4632 Eastern Ave., Linwood, 871-7177. New ownership for this Italian cafe. Bruschetta, osso buco and filet Ameretta in gorgonzola white wine cream, \$10-\$19. Full bar. Dinner Tues-Sat. MCC.

BEEHIVE TAVERN, 101 W. Riverside Dr., Augusta, (606) 756-2202. Caribbean and Spanish dishes in a 200-year-old house overlooking the Ohio River, \$11.50-\$16.50. Children half price. Lunch Wed-Sat, dinner Wed-Sun. Reservations suggested. MCC.

BELLA, 600 Walnut St., downtown, 721-7100. Italian and Mediterranean fusion cuisine \$9-\$28. In-house pastry kitchen and bi-level bar with waterfall. Extensive wine list. Private mezzanine available for special events. Located next to the Aronoff Center. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. MCC.

BOCA, 4034 Hamilton Ave., Northside, 542-2022. Gourmet Italian fare in hip, up-and-coming neighborhood. Features gnocchi, house-cured meats and diver-caught sea scallops with caramelized Brussels sprouts, \$16-\$25. Full bar. Dinner Tues-Sat. Reservations accepted. MCC. ★

BRONTE BISTRO, 2692 Madison Rd., Norwood, 396-8966. Offers pastas, unique salads, sandwiches and soups, vegetarian items, \$5.50-\$13, plus desserts and an espresso/wine bar and beer. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. Sun brunch. MCC.

CAFFE TAZZA, 2146 Auburn Ave., Mt. Auburn, 421-5282. Eclectic menu changes weekly. Soups, sandwiches, salad plates, plus espresso, cookies and cakes, \$5-\$8. Lunch Mon-Fri. MC, V.

CAROL'S ON MAIN, 825 Main St., 651-2667. Late-night dining, eclectic menu, artwork by local artists. Burgers, salads, sandwiches, pastas, fish, chops, vegetarian items, \$11-\$18. Kitchens open most nights till 1 am. Bar Tues-Sat till 2:30 am. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. MCC.

CELESTIAL RESTAURANT, 1071 Celestial St., Mt. Adams, 241-4453. Wine Spectator Award of Excellence. Fine dining cuisine artistically prepared by Chef Vick Silberberg, \$30-\$43. Spectacular city view. Full bar. Complimentary valet parking. Jazz in Clivine Lounge, dinner Tues-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

CHEZ NORA, 530 Main St., Covington, (859) 491-8027. In a turn-of-the-century building. Pasta, seafood and salads, dinner specials, \$9-\$25. Full bar. Third floor jazz club and rooftop terrace, live music Wed-Sun. Lunch & dinner seven days. Reservations accepted. MCC.

CHOCOLATE MOREL, 101 E. Main St., Mason, (513) 754-1146. Upscale fare with a Latin American flair, \$6.50-\$36. Dinner Thurs-Sat. MCC. ★

DILLY DELI WINES & GOURMET, 6818 Wooster Pke., Mariemont, 561-5233. Cozy, with two-tier English courtyard. Features soups, specialty salads and sandwiches, quiche and vegetarian items and bistro-style dinners \$4-\$14. Outdoor fireplace. Live music Fri-Sat. Wine and beer. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

GTC BAKEHOUSE, 9730 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, 984-9333. Offers freshly baked breads, soups, salads, take-out entrees by the pound, \$4-\$7. Outdoor dining during warm weather. Wine. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MC, V.

HOUSTON INN, 4026 E. 102, Lebanon, 738-7737. A Lebanon landmark known for its 45-item salad bar, fried chicken, grilled pork chops, prime rib and barbecue, \$10-\$17. Full bar. Children's menu. Dinner Tues-Sun, lunch Sun. MCC, local checks.

INDIGO CASUAL GOURMET CAFE, 2637 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 321-9952; 2053 Dixie Hwy., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 331-4339. Popular for innovative pizzas, pastas, salads, vegetarian entrees, \$5-\$18. Outdoor dining in warm weather. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

MANNA, 39 Seventh St., downtown 241-8343. Vegetarian deli and bookstore features mock chicken salad, veggie barbecue sandwich and vegan macaroni and cheese, \$2.50-\$6. Lunch Mon-Fri, Sun 11-5. MCC.

MYA'S, 9749 Kenwood Rd., Keystone Plaza, Blue Ash, 791-5005. European-cafe setting features stuffed cabbage, rainbow trout, chicken Baton Rouge, pasta and vegetarian entrees, \$6.50-\$14. Dessert bakery. Children's menu. Live music Fri. Breakfast & lunch Tues-Sun, dinner Tues-Sat. MCC.

MULLANE'S PARKSIDE CAFE, 723 Race St., downtown, 381-1331. Straightforward, health-con-

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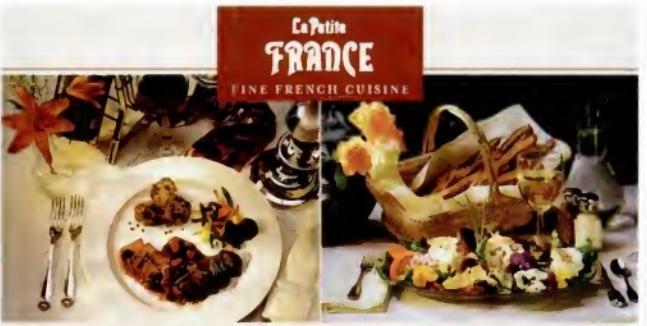
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MYRA'S DIONYSUS, 121 Calhoun St., Clifton, 961-1578. Eclectic menu includes Middle Eastern, Indonesian, Cuban specialties. Vegetarian dishes, \$3-\$8. Tables outside during warm weather. Beer & wine. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days. MC, V.

ROCK BOTTOM RESTAURANT & BREWERY, 10 Fountain Square, 621-1588. Eclectic menu features brown ale chicken, pastas, pizzas, \$9-\$19. Children's menu. Patio dining during warm weather. Full bar features handcrafted ales. Lunch & dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC, DS.

SIMONE'S, 2975 ½ Woodburn Ave., Walnut Hills, 751-3975. Casual eclectic fare including cajun tilapia fish sandwich, blackened salmon and vegetarian items, \$5-\$14. Live jazz Thurs. Lunch seven days, dinner Tues-Sat. Sun brunch. MC, V.

TELLER'S OF HYDE PARK, 2710 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 321-4721. In the old Hyde Park Savings & Loan. Eclectic menu, including tapas, pastas, Pacific Rim and Mediterranean dishes, sandwiches, \$4-\$22. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Features extensive wine list, 100 beers, 30 on tap, handcrafted ales. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days, Sun brunch. MCC.

TINKS, 3410 Telford Ave., Clifton, 961-6500. Creative cuisine featuring fusion dishes, \$13-\$22. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Sat, Dinner seven days. Sun brunch. MCC.

TOUSEY HOUSE, 5963 Jefferson St., Burlington, (859) 689-0200. Upscale, creative cuisine with a hint of Southern flair. Menu changes seasonally, \$18-\$24. Full bar. Dinner Thurs-Sat. MCC. ★

WILDFLOUR BAKERY, 308 Greenup St., Covington, (859) 581-1000. A charming little house surrounded by a lush garden and patio. Quirky and delicious cuisine includes seafood tapas at night and home baked goods during the day, \$6-\$15. Outdoor dining. Beer and wine. Lunch & dinner Tues-Fri, dinner Sat, Sun brunch. MCC.

french

LA CARAVELLE, 4 Endicott St., Greenhills, 825-7135. Authentic French cuisine, including regional entrées highlighting Burgundy, Provence, Alsace and Normandy, \$17-\$26. Full bar. Reservations suggested on weekends. Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Tues-Sun, brunch Sun. MCC.

LE CEZANNE, 1 Wyoming Ave., Wyoming, 948-9399; 2727 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 533-3110. Fabrice Collet and his wife, Martine, offer soups, salads, quiche, plus pastries & croissants. Outdoor dining. Breakfast & lunch Tues-Sat, Sun breakfast. MCC.

CHATEAU POMIJE, 2019 Madison Rd., O'Bryanville, 871-8788. Popular neighborhood hangout offers cioppino, salmon, veal scallopine, eggplant Florentine, tortellini, vegetarian dishes, \$10-\$23. Outdoor dining. Wine. Happy hour Wed-Fri, 4-6:30. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. DS, MC, V.

CHATEAU POMIJE WINERY & BANQUET FACILITY, 2504 Jacobs Rd., Guilford, IN, (800) 791-9463. Dine in an 18th century chateau surrounded by 75 acres of vines. Stuffed portobella mushroom, pork tenderloin, fresh fish, \$14-\$21. Full bar. Lunch Sun only, dinner Wed-Sun. Reservations suggested. MCC.

Jean-Robert at PIGALL'S, 127 W. Fourth St., downtown, (513) 721-1345. Jonah crab with summer watermelon, rack of lamb with eggplant

roulade, cinnamon walnut chocolate tart, \$6.50
prix fixe menu. Dinner Tues-Sat. Reservations required. MCC. ★

THE MAISONETTE, 114 E. Sixth St., downtown 721-2260. A Mobil Guide five-star restaurant. Contemporary and classic French cuisine. Lunch \$12-\$25; dinner \$33-\$41. Valet parking. Jackets required. Excellent wine list. Full bar. Prix fixe three course dinner Mon-Thurs, \$50. Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC, checks. ☎

LA PETITE FRANCE, 3177 Glendale-Milford Rd., Evendale, 733-8383. Restaurant and bistro serves French cuisine, including veal sweetbreads in puff pastry, filet mignon with morel sauce \$17-\$26. Full bar. Outdoor dining. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

MARY JO'S CUISINE, 308 S. Campus Ave., Oxford, (513) 523-2653. European-style cafe with country French food. Everything prepared from scratch—from sausages to breads to pastries. Full bar. Lunch Wed (\$7-\$9); dinner Fri-Sat (French country dinners)—fixed menu with three choices \$30). Reservations suggested. MC, V.

german/hungarian

THE BEST CAFE, 17 E. Mulberry St., Lebanon, 932-4400. Classic American fare like blackened salmon and New York strip, \$8.50-\$15. Lunch seven days, dinner Tues-Sat. Holiday brunch. Children's menu. Local and International beers on tap. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner Wed-Sat. MCC.

CHRISTOF'S, 16 Village Square, Glendale, 772-4300. Homemade cuisine with European flair. Dinner, \$9-\$12. Reservations for parties of 6 or more. Dinner Tues-Sat. MCC.

THE IRON SKILLET, 6900 Valley Ave., Newtown, 561-6776. Friendly neighborhood spot features Hungarian specialties—schnitzel, sauerbraten, veal cordon bleu, cabbage rolls. Lunch \$3.50-\$10, dinner \$10-\$24. Full bar. Lunch Tues-Sat, dinner Tues-Sun. Reservations for 5 or more. DS, MC, V.

MECKLENBURG GARDENS, 302 E. University, Corryville, 221-5333. Serving German specialties—schnitzels, sausages, pastas, garlic soup. Plus the famous coffee-fritter black-bottom pecan pie, \$5.50-\$19. Full bar features beer garden. Live entertainment Wed (German night). Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. MCC. ☎

THE SHERMAN HOUSE, 35 S. Main St., Batesville, IN, (800) 445-4939. German-American food—especially schnitzel—\$9-\$22. Full bar. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC.

greek

ROMBES RESTAURANT, 10375 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, 891-4170, 793-6368 for a list of daily specials. American and Greek dishes. Gyros, Greek salads, burgers, soups and sandwiches, \$4.75-\$7.75, plus daily specials. Breakfast, lunch & dinner, Mon-Sat. MC, V.

SEBASTIAN'S, 5209 Glenway Ave., Price Hill, 471-2100. Owner's baseball hat collection and old army pictures decorate the place. Serves gyros, spanakopita, tiropita, special seasoned fries, Greek salads. Grilled cheese and hot dogs for kids, \$1.30-\$7.25. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. Cash.

home-style

ANCHOR GRILL, 438 Pike St., Covington, (859) 431-9498. Neighborhood hangout. Serves Glier's



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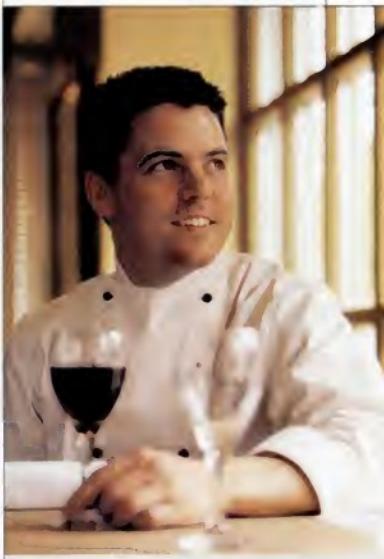
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chef's best

From an early age, Dan Chrzanowski, the chef/owner of Promontory Bar and Grill, appreciated a well-rounded meal. "Growing up outside Detroit, it was always important that we sit down as a family for dinner every day. Both of my parents are very comfortable in the kitchen, and their love for food inspired me to do what I do." Chrzanowski picked up his culinary tricks at Johnson and Wales College of Culinary Arts in Miami. Here, he lists his favorite tools of the trade

1. In typical "guy" fashion, my favorite kitchen tools are the power tools. The **Bermixer** by Dito Dean Food Prep (www.ditodean.com) is a great hand-held mixer. You just stick it right in the bowl to make a vinaigrette. You can even make a smoothie with it.

2. I also like the **Robot Coupe R2 Ultra** (www.robotcoupe.net). It's a fancy, industrial type of food processor that can do everything from making small-batch sauces to chopping garlic to whipping cream.

3. I really enjoy highly seasoned foods. **Salt & pepper** rank as my favorite seasonings because of their versatility and the way they enhance so many other flavors. Cumin seed is another favorite.

4. I love **cilantro, arugula, fennel and garlic**. I use cilantro and fennel in a Promontory special—honey and cilantro seared scallops with a red pepper and fennel slaw. I slice the fennel paper-thin—fennel tastes so good that way—and toss it with a champagne vinegar and honey reduction.

5. **The Joy of Cooking** is such a great book. It provides a basis for just about anything you could need to make.

6. I recently became a fan of **single malt Scotch**.

There's a wide range and its fun to try new ones. My favorite is 12-year Glenlivet. It's not a special occasion Scotch, it's something you could drink any day.

7. I also like **small batch Bourbons** like **Basil Hayden's**.

8. My favorite wine is a **1999 ZD Pinot Noir**. I don't have it on the wine menu at Promontory anymore—it's pretty expensive—but I still have bottles in the back if someone asks. I pair this with my veal scaloppini, thin scallops of veal on linguine with wild mushrooms and gorgonzola in a red wine and shallot sauce.

9. On a hot June day, all I need for a meal is some **fresh guacamole and chips** and a **top-shelf Margarita** that's made with Patron Silver tequila, fresh lime, Cointreau, a little sugar and plenty of ice.

The only avocados to use in guacamole are California Haas avocados, because they have an oily base. I add cilantro, jalapeños and fresh tomatoes to my guacamole.

Promontory Bar and Grill, 1111 St. Gregory St., Mt. Adams, (513) 651-4777

goetta, chicken, breakfast all day, \$3.50-\$7. Open 24 hours seven days. Cash. G

CAMP WASHINGTON CHILI, Colerain & Hopple, Camp Washington, 541-0061. Neighborhood chili parlor serves double-deckers, salads, \$1.20-\$5. Children's menu. Open 24 hours. Closed Sun. Cash. G

THE ECHO, 3510 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park Square, 321-2816. Longtime favorite with Hyde Parkers. Low-fat and healthy items, plus daily dinner specials, \$2-\$12. Children's menu. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

GREEN DERBY, 846 York St., Newport, (859) 431-8740. Home-style beef liver, lean pork chop and halibut. Specialty is grilled, baked, fried or blackened seafood, \$8-\$14. Plus Green Derby salad with hor bacon dressing. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner Thurs-Sat, breakfast and lunch Sun-Wed. DS, MC, V.

HAMBURGER MARY'S, 909 Vine St., downtown, 381-6279. Flamboyant chain restaurant with hot-pink walls and posters of Joan Crawford. Serves hamburgers, sandwiches and salads, \$6.25-\$8.50. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

HATHAWAY'S COFFEE SHOP, Carew Tower Arcade, 621-1332. A downtown mainstay. Serves breakfast all day, plus lunch entrees, sandwiches, salads, soups, \$3-\$6. Sodas and shakes. Mon-Sat. MC, V.

HOMEBAKED HAM CO. & CAFE, 12170 Mason-Montgomery Rd., Deerfield Twp., 583-8792. Soups, salads and sandwiches featuring artisan breads. Also pastries, bagels and espresso drinks, \$2-\$6. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, Sun 10-4. MCC.

LANA'S, 7750 Reading Rd., Roselawn, 948-0765. Urban soul food like made-from-scratch baked macaroni & cheese and peach cobbler, plus barbecue ribs, pork chops and chicken wings. Lunch & dinner Weds, Fri, Sat, Tues, Sun noon-7. Cash.

PILDER'S DELI & RESTAURANT, 4070 E. Galbraith Rd., Deer Park, 792-9961. Kosher specialties like matzo ball soup, potato latkes and corned beef brisket, \$5-\$10. Breakfast & lunch seven days, dinner Sun, Wed, Thurs. Brunch Sun, AE, DS, MC.

RED FOX GRILL, 232 E. Sixth St., 621-7924. Soups and a variety of sandwiches—roast beef, ham, tuna, turkey, breakfast & lunch Mon-Fri. Cash.

RON'S ROOST, 3853 Race Rd., Western Hills, 574-0222. Casual, neighborly atmosphere. Offers fried chicken, "Oktoberfest" sauerkraut and their famous hor bacon slaw. Plus steaks, chops and ribs, \$5-\$16. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days, Sun breakfast. DS, MC, V.

SUGAR 'N' SPICE RESTAURANT, 4381 Reading Rd., Paddock Hills, 242-3521. Nonsmoking spot for breakfast served all day, plus daily lunch specials, \$3-\$7. Breakfast & lunch seven days. Cash.

SKYLINE CHILI, 254 E. Fourth St., 241-4848. Chili three-, four- or five-ways, coney. Mon-Sat. Multiple locations; hours vary. MCC. G

STENGER'S CAFE & MR. PIG'S TOO, 1720 Vine St., Over-the-Rhine, 651-2251. Red beans & rice, rib tips, greens, "this is a soul-food place." Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. Full bar. Cash.

TUCKER'S, 1637 Vine St., Over-the-Rhine, 721-7123. Plenty of vegetarian choices in this home-style diner, including 5 kinds of veggie burgers, plus melts, baked chicken and rice, pork chops, roast beef, fish, \$4.50-\$7. Breakfast and lunch Mon-Sat, Sun brunch. Cash.

WHAT'S FOR DINNER, Corner of Madison Road and O'Bryan St., O'Bryonville, 321-4404. Eat in or take out deli serves casseroles, salads and desserts. Restaurant in old O'Bryan farmhouse



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ZIP'S CAFE, 1036 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, 871-9876. Family place with chili, burgers, fries, chicken sandwiches. Regulars ask for the "Zipburger," \$2.50-\$6.25 Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V. ☀

indian

AKASH INDIA, 24 E. Sixth St., 723-1300. Specializes in Indian cuisine: tandoori chicken, curries and vegetable entrees, \$4-\$12. Lunch buffet with 10 items, \$6. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

AMBAR INDIA, 350 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, 281-7000. Features Indian cuisine, including chicken Tandoori, curried and vegetable entrees, \$7-\$13. Beer & wine. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

ANAND INDIA, 10890 Reading Rd., Sharonville, 554-4040. Specializes in Northern Indian cuisine. Lamb, chicken, fish and vegetarian entrees, plus tandoori-oven dishes. \$7-\$13.50. Full bar features Indian beer. Lunch & dinner seven days. Reservations for more than five, MCC.

MAYURA, 3201 Jefferson Ave., Clifton, 221-7125. Chicken tandoori, spicy samosas, curried fish, vegetable dishes, \$7-\$15. Children's menu. Entertainment Wed-Sat. Full bar. Lunch buffet Tues-Sat (\$7.50); dinner Tues-Sun. Sun brunch noon-3. MCC.

SITAR, 4270 Hunt Rd., Blue Ash, 793-7487. Specializes in South & North Indian cuisine, plus regional specials, \$7-\$17. Full bar. Children's menu. Valet parking. Lunch Tues-Sun, dinner seven days. Weekend reservations. MCC.

TANDOOR INDIA RESTAURANT, 8702 Market Place Ln., Montgomery, 793-7484. Attractive setting. Indian cuisine: tandoori chicken, boti kabob, samosas and seafood, \$9-\$15. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC.

UDIPU CAFÉ, 7633 Reading Rd., Roselawn, (513) 821-2021. Vegetarian South Indian cuisine. Dosa, utthappam, pulavas and curries. Lunch buffet Mon, Wed-Fri. MCC.

italian

ANDIAMO, 3235 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 321-4155. Authentic Italian cuisine featuring veal, seafood, a variety of pastas and a large wine selection, \$17.95-\$36.95. Available for private parties. Dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

ANTONIO'S RISTORANTE ITALIANO, 7165 Liberty Center Dr., West Chester, 755-7242. Fine-dining in award-winning family restaurant from Tennessee. Made-from-scratch Italian dishes, including nutty chicken marsala, cooked in open kitchen. Dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC.

BARRETT'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT, 4111 Webster Ave., Deer Park, 793-2540. Owner/chef-operated. Features fresh fish, veal, steak, \$12-\$33. Extensive wine list. Full bar. Dinner Tues-Sat. Weekend reservations recommended. MCC.

BETTA'S ITALIAN CUISINE, 1026 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, 871-2233. Italian food cooked by owner Elizabeth DeLuca. Meat cannelloni, manicotti, cacciatore, chicken casserole Milanesa, \$8-\$12. Plus cod Italiano and eggplant specialties, salads and sandwiches. Wine & beer. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations for eight or more. MC, V.

BRIOS TUSCAN GRILLE, 1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 431-0900. Tuscan-style Italian food, specialty pastas, steaks & chops, \$11-\$25. Outdoor

dining, valet parking. Full bars inside and outside. Lunch & dinner seven days, Sun brunch. MCC.

BUCA DI BEPPO, 2635 Edmondson Rd., Norwood, 396-POPE (7673). Family-style Italian food in kitschy surroundings. Try pizzas, pastas, eggplant parmigiana and chicken cacciatore \$8-\$20. Full bar. Dinner seven days, lunch Sun. MCC.

CARRABA'S ITALIAN GRILL, \$152 Merten Dr., Deerfield Twp., 339-0900. Features pastas, pizzas and grilled specialties, \$8-\$18. Dinner seven days. MCC.

FERRARI'S LITTLE ITALY, 7677 Goff Terr., Madeira, 272-2220. Family-style dining. Regional Italian specialties such as seafood cannelloni, pesto salmon, spaghetti Mediterranean, eggplant parmesan, \$8-\$17. Lunch entrees, \$5-\$8. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. Weekend reservations. MCC.

GERMANO'S RESTAURANT, 9415 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, 794-1155. Fresh seafood, chicken, veal, pasta, \$14-\$26. Desserts include tiramisu and fresh raspberry pie. Extensive wine list. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC.

KARLO'S BISTRO ITALIA, 4911 Houston Rd., at Turfway Road, Florence, 282-8282. Spacious dining room, nice bar in back. Offers pastas, pizzas and specialties, \$9-\$16. Desserts, \$4.50. Children's menu. Outdoor bar and patio. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. Reservations accepted. MCC.

LAROSA'S, 2409-17 Boudinot Ave., Westwood, 347-5660; 47 other locations, to place an order call 347-1111. Family restaurants. Pastas, pizzas, hoagies, from \$3.29. Hours vary, but most locations are open till midnight on weekends. Most accept major credit cards. ☀

NICOLA'S RISTORANTE, 1420 Sycamore St., Over-the-Rhine, 721-6200. Northern Italian cuisine in a renovated incline car barn. Bruschetta, calamari al pomodoro, osso buco. Full bar. Valet parking, weekends. Lunch (\$5.25-\$10) Mon-Fri, dinner (\$10-\$22) Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

PANE E VINO, 2724 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 321-7100. Casual trattoria features pastas, salads and innovative Italian cuisine, \$5.50-\$17. Children's menu. Live music. Extensive wine list. Full bar. Dinner Tues-Sun. MCC.

OLD SPAGHETTI FACTORY, 6320 Gilmore Ave., Forest Park, 942-6620. Soup or salad, spaghetti with meatballs, ice cream and coffee or tea, \$8. Full bar. Lunch and dinner seven days. MCC.

PASTA AL DENTE, 3672 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 321-7400. Small, intimate setting. Offers Italian pastas, steak and seafood. Wine & beer. Entrees \$9-\$17. Outdoor dining. Dinner seven days. MCC.

PRIMAVISTA, at the Queen's Tower, 810 Matson Pl., Price Hill, 251-6467. Great view of the city. Entrees include veal, fresh fish, seafood, lamb, steaks and pastas, \$15-\$25. Full bar. Dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC.

SCALEA'S RISTORANTE, 318-20 Greenup, Covington, (859) 491-3334. Upscale Italian food. Seasonal menu, \$22-\$38. Full bar features all-Italian wine list. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Outdoor dining. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

SCOTTI'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT, 919 Vine St., 721-9484. Italian home cooking, including 23 veal and beef dishes, 25 pastas, steaks, osso buco, lasagna. Dinners from \$13. Wine. Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Tues-Sat. Reservations a must. MC, V, ©

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TRATTORIA ROMA, 609 Walnut St., downtown, 723-0220. Serves authentic antipasti, pasta, beef, chicken and veal, \$15-\$25. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat, from \$9. MCC.

VINCENZO'S, 11085 Springfield Pk., Springfield, 771-2022. Cozy Italian ristorante serves pastas, veal, chicken and fresh seafood dishes. Wine & beer. Lunch Mon-Fri, from \$6, dinner Mon-Sat, from \$9. Cash.

VITO'S CAFE, 654 Highland Ave., Ft. Thomas, (859) 442-9444. Local talent perform arias while delivering steamy dishes of pasta and osso buco. Full bar. Dinner Wed-Sun, MCC.

japanese

ANDO, 916 Columbus Rd., Lebanon, 932-3338. Casual fare in a strip mall near the Fujitec plant and headquarters in Lebanon. Sushi, sashimi, noodle bowls and tempura (\$7.50-\$38). Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Tues-Sun. Reservations suggested. MCC.

JO AN JAPANESE RESTAURANT, 3940 Olympic Blvd., Erlanger (859) 746-2644. Authentic Japanese cuisine—sushi, sashimi, tempuras, yakimono and seasonal delicacies in upscale setting. Traditional kaiseki course meal available with 24-hour notice (from \$50). Wine & beer, Japanese sake. Lunch Tues-Fri (\$7.50-\$15), dinner Tues-Sun (from \$20). Reservations suggested. MCC.

KO-SHO JAPANESE RESTAURANT, 215 E. Ninth St., 665-4950. Chef Yukio serves Japanese dishes, including sashimi, sukiyaki and tempuras, from \$11. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC.

MATSUJI, 7149 Mandalay Dr., Florence, (859) 746-1199. Sushi bar, tatami room. Offers sushi, sashimi, tonkatsu, kaiseki full-course dinner, \$11-\$34. Plus traditional dishes, including sukiyaki, shabu-shabu and seafood nabe. Children's menu. Wine & beer. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC.

SUSHI RAY, 1018 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, 533-9218; 650 Walnut, downtown, 651-2676 (lunch Mon-Fri only). Features sushi, sashimi, teriyaki, tempuras. Lunch \$9, dinner \$15-\$25. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

korean

KOREAN RIVERSIDE RESTAURANT, 512 Madison Ave., Covington, (859) 291-1484. Authentic Korean food—bulgogi, kimchi, seafood dishes, \$10-\$30. Beer. Lunch & dinner Tues-Sun. Weekend reservations. MCC. ★

SILLA'S, 11420 Chester Rd., Sharonville, 771-4360. Korean dishes like bi bim bat and bulgogi, plus sushi and Japanese items, \$6-\$25. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues-Sun. MCC.

mediterranean

ANDY'S MEDITERRANEAN GRILLE, 906 Nassau St., Walnut Hills, 281-9791. Lebanese and other Middle Eastern staples like kibbeh, tabouli and falafels. Andy's dishes have American flair. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

FLOYD'S, 127 Calhoun St., Clifton, 221-2434. Owners Emile and Reine Salif offer dolmas, falafel, hummus and tabbouleh. Try the award-winning spit-roasted chicken marinated in Mediterranean spices, \$6-\$10. Lunch & dinner Tues-Fri, dinner Sat. Cash.

THE GOURMET ON BROADWAY, 20 N. Broadway, Lebanon, 933-8377. Small, friendly spot serves salads, pita sandwiches and soups with Mediterranean touches, \$3.50-\$7. Plus gourmet coffees and teas. Breakfast & lunch Mon-Sat. Cash.

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mexican/ southwestern

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AMIGO'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT, 8111 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd., West Chester, 777-9424; 11711 Princeton Pkwy., Springdale, 671-5985. Mexican food from Leal and Rodriguez families. Chicken in mole sauce, chorizo and guachinango amiglo (marinated baked snapper) are specialties, \$3-\$10. Children's menu. Entertainment Sat.-Sun. Full bar. Lunch Tues-Sat, dinner seven days. Weekend reservations. MCC.

BURRITO JOE'S, 11039 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp, 469-1150; various other locations. Combo burritos, taco platters, Joe's salads, rice & bean platter, up to \$4.75. Full bar. Outside dining. Will validate parking garage tickets. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CANCUN, 11030 Hamilton Ave., Pleasant Run, 851-6310. Flexible, friendly staff offers generous portions. Chimichangas, carne asada, chicken flautas, \$6-\$11. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch and dinner seven days. MCC.

EL COYOTE, 3041 Dixie Hwy., Edgewood, (859) 331-6767. Steaks, chops, seafood and Southwestern entrees, \$7-\$20. Great margaritas, hot bar snacks. Dinner seven days. MCC.

GUADALAJARA GRILL, 7991 Beechmont Ave., Anderson, 474-4325. Casual family dining. Nachos, chiles rellenos, enchiladas \$6-\$11. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch and dinner seven days. MCC.

HABANERO, 358 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, 961-6800. Specializes in Latin American fare, \$2-\$10. Tangerine ginger chicken with pineapple almond salsa. Children's menu. Acoustic music. Wine & beer. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC. ★

HABITS CAFE, 3036 Madison Rd., 631-8367. Pub setting. Full menu with a touch of Tex/Mex, plus chicken wings, ostrich, salads, nachos and their famous potato rags, \$5-\$8. Daily specials. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. DS, MC, V.

LA MEXICANA, 642 Monmouth St., Newport, (859) 291-3320. Authentic tacos, burritos and atmosphere in this restaurant/grocery. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

LA SALSA FRESH MEXICAN GRILL, 3880 Paxton Ave., Hyde Park Plaza, 321-4400; Fields-Ertel Rd., Deerfield Twp., 677-0300. Features hand-crafted Mexican food. Salsa bar prepared from scratch daily. Beers and margaritas. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

MARGARITA'S, 8112 Beechmont Ave., Anderson Twp., 474-4154; 214 E. Sixth St., downtown, 241-1223; 28 W. Fourth St., Tower Place, 241-2313; 3218 Dixie Hwy., Erlanger, Ky., (859) 426-9792. Authentic Mexican dishes, mariachi band (Wed Anderson, Sun Erlanger). Full bar features 12 flavors of Margaritas. Entrees \$8-\$13. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

RINCON MEXICANO, 4450 Eastgate Blvd., 943-9923. Authentic Mexican food—fajitas, enchiladas, burritos, \$6.50-\$20. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

SYLVIA'S, 15 E. 7th St., Newport, (859) 431-8110. Family-run, small family restaurant. Pork in green chile sauce, hand-made ramen, mole, from \$1.50-\$8.95. Full bar. Lunch and dinner seven days. MC, V.

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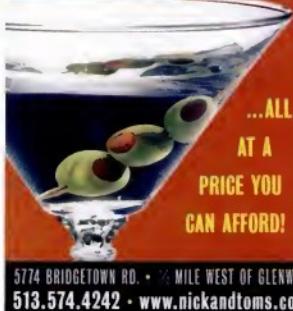
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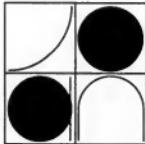
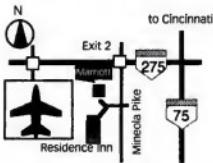
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DINE

pizza

DEWEY'S PIZZA, 3014 Madison Rd., Oakley, 731-7755; 11338 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Township, 247-9955, 1 Levee Way, Suite 3100, Newport, (859) 431-9700. Try the Green Lantern pizza with minced garlic, artichokes, mushrooms, pesto and goat cheese. Also calzones, salads and a selection of wines and microbrews, \$6-\$19. Music Mon in Oakley. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat (Sun lunch in Newport). Reservations for six or more. MCC. ★

GUSTO'S, 950 Pavilion St., Mt. Adams, 333-0170. Mike Groeschen spins the dough in this former Cherrington's location. Specialty pizzas like the asparagusto or twice-baked potato, plus daily pasta specials and pizza by the slice, \$7-\$16 (\$2 for a slice). Full bar. Lunch and dinner Tues-Sat. Sun brunch 10-3. MCC.

POMODORI'S PIZZERIA & TRATTORIA, 121 W. McMillan St., Clifton, 861-0080; 7880 Remington Rd., Montgomery, 794-0080. Pizzas from wood-fired Italian oven, including deep-dish and Sicilian, sandwiches, salads, pastas, \$3.50-\$14.50. Beer & wine. Dine in, carry out; free delivery in Clifton area. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

seafood

BELUGA, 3520 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, 533-4444 or 533-0935. Features a Euro-Asian menu with such entrees as Asian pork tenderloin, rack of lamb, blackened lobster pasta, \$12-\$25. Plus a traditional sushi bar and caviar, naturally. Full bar. Dinner Mon-Sat. MCC. ★

BLAKE'S SEAFOOD GRILL, 3159 Montgomery Rd., Landen, 697-0800. Part of the Hyde Park restaurant chain based in Cleveland, Blake's features macadamia-nut crusted grouper, wood-grilled lobster, steaks and sandwiches, \$8-\$19. Full bar. Dinner 7 days. MCC.



THE EMBASSY GRILLE, at Embassy Suites Cincinnati Rivercenter, 10 E. Rivercenter Blvd., Covington, (859) 261-8400. Great city view. Seafood, chicken, beef and fresh pasta, \$12-\$25. Full bar. Lounge Mon-Sat til 1. Sun til midnight. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days. Reservations accepted. MCC.

J'S FRESH SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, at the Regency, 2444 Madison Rd., Hyde Park, 871-2888. Specializes in fresh seafood and steaks, \$12-\$23. Children's menu. Casual attire. Valet parking. More than 250 wines. Full bar. Lunch Tues-Fri, dinner Tues-Sun. Reservations accepted. MCC. ★

MICHAEL G'S RESTAURANT & BANQUET HALL, 4601 Kellogg Ave., East End, 533-3131. Overlooking the Ohio River. Features Colorado Lake trout, Boston scrod, yellowfin tuna, \$10-\$31, plus rack of lamb, filet mignon and pastas. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Valet parking on weekends. Full bar. Early bird Sun-Thurs, live jazz Fri-Sat. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. Sun brunch. MCC.

MT. ADAMS FISH HOUSE, 940 Pavilion St., Mt. Adams, 421-3250. Featuring fresh seafood, a sushi bar and daily specials. Best bets: tuna, planked salmon, stuffed swordfish. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat. MCC. ★

steaks

CARLO & JOHNNY, 9769 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, 936-8600. Jeff Ruby's steaks and a menu with distinctive Italian accents in an elaborate 1940s supper club/ganster hideaway setting. Pasta, seafood and dry-aged steaks, \$13-\$38. Full bar. Dinner seven days. MCC, DC. ★

THE GRAND CAFE, at the Hilton Greater Cincinnati Airport, 7373 Turfway Rd. at I-75 (exit 182), Florence, (859) 371-9779. Extensive menu of hand-cut steaks, seafood and prime rib, \$13-\$22. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. Sun brunch. Reservations suggested. MCC.

on the table southern indian cuisine

Udipi Cafe Pure Vegetarian South Indian Cuisine, 7635 Reading Rd., Roselawn, (513) 821-2021

Udipi Cafe will surprise you. The small restaurant features South Indian specialty breads—dosa, vada and batura. Dosa, a kind of paper-thin crepe, comes with fillings such as curried potatoes, caramelized onions and spicy chutney. Rasam, a traditional South Indian soup, arrives with vada—lovely, light donuts made of lentil flour—for dipping. Don't miss the malai kofta, balls of cheese, potato and fruit chutney cooked in a slightly sweet and nutty cashew cream sauce. You may never go north again.

FYI Wed-Mon 11:30-9:30. Rasam \$2.50, chana batura \$6.50, malai kofta \$6.25



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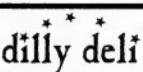
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DINE

JEFF RUBY'S, 700 Walnut St., 784-1200. Dry-aged steaks, live Maine lobsters, seafood, rack of lamb, \$20-\$40. Valet parking. Jackets required. Cigar menu, full bar, nightly entertainment. Dinner Mon.-Sat. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

JIMMY D'S, 7791 Cooper Rd., Montgomery, 984-2914. Specializes in fine aged steaks, chops and seafood, \$17-\$30. Full bar. Dinner Mon.-Sat. Reservations accepted. MCC. ★

MAURY'S TINY COVE, 3908 Harrison Ave., Cheviot, 662-2683. A west side mainstay popular for steaks, barbecue ribs, prime rib and seafood, \$6-\$30. Full bar. Lunch Mon.-Fri., dinner Mon.-Sat. MCC.

MONTGOMERY INN, 9440 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, 791-3482; 400 Buttermill Pkwy., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 344-5333. Famous for barbecue choice pork loin-backs, plus chicken, New York sirloin, pork chops, \$11-\$23. Children's menu. Valet parking. Full bar. Lunch Mon.-Fri., dinner seven days. First seating on Sat., 3-4:30 p.m. No reservations accepted. MCC. ★

MORTON'S OF CHICAGO, Tower Place, 28 W. Fourth St., 241-4104. Steaks are the main attraction—from 14-ounce filet to 24-ounce porterhouse—plus filet oskar, prime rib, shrimp, swordfish steak, \$20-\$35. Valet parking. Full bar. Dinner seven days. Reservations accepted. MCC.

PARKERS BLUE ASH GRILL, 4200 Cooper Rd., Blue Ash, 891-8300. Cedar-planked Salmon, herb-roasted chicken, prime rib, \$10-\$26. Full bar. Lunch Mon.-Fri., dinner seven days. Sun brunch. Reservations accepted. MCC.

THE PRECINCT, 311 Delta Ave., Columbia-Tusculum, 321-5454. Jeff Ruby's original steakhouse. "Best steaks for miles around," say connoisseurs. Prime steaks and seafood entries, \$17-\$34. Full bar features extensive wine list. Dinner seven days. Reservations suggested. MCC. ★

TROPICANA, 1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 491-8900. Shrimp in a haystack, Cuban seafood stew mambo caldo, lobster and jack cheese taco, \$13.50-\$26.50. Full bar. Reservations recommended. Lunch Mon.-Fri., dinner seven days. MCC.

sri-lankan

ARALIA, 215 Loveland-Madiera Rd., Loveland, 697-8777. Authentic Sri Lankan meat, poultry, seafood and vegetarian entrees, \$6-\$15. Plus wine, beer and homemade ginger beer. Lunch Tues.-Fri., dinner Tues.-Sat. MC, V.

thai

AMARIN, 2022 Miami Ave., Madeira, 272-6900. Variety of Thai dishes, sushi bar, \$3.95-\$15.95. Patio open during summer. Full bar. Lunch Mon.-Sat., dinner seven days. Reservations for five or more. MC, V. ★

ARLOI DEE, 18 E. Seventh St., downtown, 421-1304; 4929 Socialville Foster Rd., Mason, 229-3997. The Lumsun family serves polo tek, phad prig squid (hot chili squid) and phad prig khing (curry paste & green beans), \$6-\$25. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon.-Sat. Sun 4-9 p.m. MCC.

BANGKOK BISTRO, 3506 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, 871-0707. Pad thai, seafood choo chee, beef Massaman curry, \$10-\$17. Patio dining. Full bar. Lunch specials, \$6-\$8. Lunch Mon.-Fri., dinner seven days. MC, V.

LEMON GRASS THAI RESTAURANT, 2666 Madison Rd., Hyde Park, 321-2882. Small, nonsmoking spot features chicken curry, pad thai, satays, seafood basil, vegetarian items. Beer & wine. Lunch Mon.-Fri., \$5-\$6. Dinner seven days, \$8-\$13. Reservations suggested. MCC.

RUTHAI'S KITCHEN, 3164 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, 871-7687. Dine in or carryout Thai favorites like green papaya salad, pad see ew plus seafood curry and sushi bar, \$5.25-\$14. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. MCC.

TEAK THAI CUISINE & SUSHI BAR, 1049 St. Gregory St., Mt. Adams, 665-9800. Offers soups, fried rice, chicken and beef curries, noodle dishes, \$9-\$15. Sushi bar downstairs, patio dining during the summer. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. MCC.

vietnamese

SONG LONG, 1737 Section Rd., Roselawn, 351-7631. Family-owned. Serves Vietnamese and Chinese dishes—shrimp rolls, bun thit nuong ga (rice noodles topped with chicken), \$4.25-\$15. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat. MCC.

SONG PHUNG RESTAURANT, 637-A Northland Blvd., Forest Park, 825-9292. Traditional Vietnamese specialties, plus some Chinese and vegetarian entrees, \$7-\$14. Deim Tam (Vietnamese dim sum), Sat-Sun. Beer & wine. Lunch & dinner Tues-Sun. MCC.

on the river

DON PABLO'S MEXICAN KITCHEN & CANTINA, Riverboat Row in Newport (859) 261-7100. Mesquite-grilled fajitas, hand-rolled enchiladas, steaks, fresh frijoles, handmade tortillas, \$5.50-\$16. Full bar. Lunch and dinner seven days. MCC.

FOUR SEASONS RESTAURANT, 4609 Kellogg Ave., Columbia-Tusculum, 871-1820. Fresh seafood, barbecued ribs, steaks, chicken, pasta, \$13-\$29. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. Brunch Sat-Sun. MCC.

MIKE FINK, 100 foot of Greenup Street, Covington, (859) 261-4212. Authentic Sternwheeler-turned restaurant. Steaks, seafood and extensive raw bar \$7-\$30. Full bar. Lunch Mon-Sat, dinner seven days, Sun brunch. Reservations suggested. MCC.

MONTGOMERY INN BOATHOUSE, 925 Eastern Ave., 721-7427. Great river view. Known for barbecue pork loin-back ribs. Plus chicken, New York strip, pork chops, \$13-\$26. Full bar. Valet parking. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner seven days. No Sat reservations after 4:30, MCC.

SOUTH BEACH GRILL AT THE WATERFRONT, 14 Pete Rose Pier, Covington (859) 581-1414. Steaks are dry-aged for 28 days at this upscale steakhouse and entertainment complex. Also features an elaborate raw bar and fresh sushi made by master chef, \$20-\$40. Full bar, live music six nights, dancing. Dinner seven days. MCC.

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Dead Certain

Established in 1845, Spring Grove Cemetery is more than just a final resting place. It's an arboretum, bird sanctuary, historic site, and a quiet, shady running route with great statues. • LINDA VACCARELLO

ANSWERS 1. Cholera 2. Salmon P. Chase 3. 400 acres; a little more than half 4. The Temple of Love 5. "Paper Doll"; 1915 6. He was an abolitionist who helped thousands of slaves escape 7. Founder of the Cincinnati Art Museum 8. The Civil War 9. A 375-year-old white oak tree 10. Common witch hazel

1 An epidemic prompted city leaders to seek land for the creation of a "rural" cemetery. What was the disease?

2 One of the cemetery's founders was a governor, U.S. senator, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and Secretary of the Treasury. Name him.

3 Today the cemetery contains 733 acres. How much of this land has been developed?

4 Prussian landscape gardener Adolph Strauch made Spring Grove a leader in cemetery design. Nearby Mt. Storm Park has a curious gazebo designed by him. What's it called?

5 Songwriter Johnny S. Black, buried at Spring Grove in 1936, didn't live to hear the Mills Brothers version of this song become a hit. What was it? **BONUS:** When did he write it?

6 Quaker Levi Coffin is buried here, too. Some Southerners considered him infamous. Why?

7 Figures on Charles West's monument represent theater, music, dance and literature. What was West's claim to fame?

8 There are 41 generals from which war interred here?

9 Spring Grove is nationally famous as an arboretum with more than 1,200 species. What's the oldest growing thing?

10 Of catalpa, crepe myrtle and common witch hazel, which are you likely to see blooming on the Spring Grove grounds in November?



*she
used to
have
migraines*



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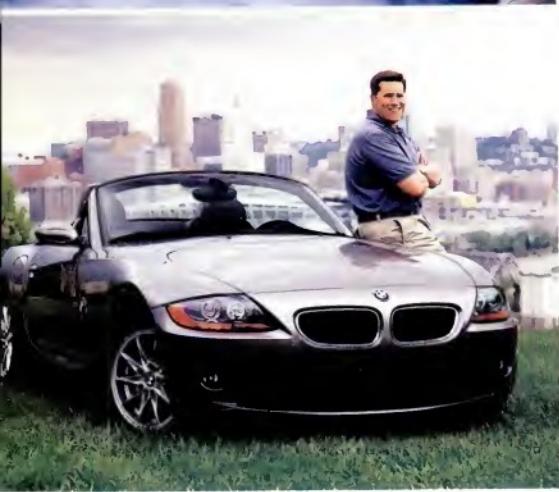
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Ray Beck, Senior Vice President, Provident Bank & owner of the 2003 BMW Z4

A sure thing—that's what Ray Beck looks for in a loan applicant, and what he's found behind the wheel of his BMW Z4 roadster. Whether he's accelerating onto the AA Highway from his 10-acre home in California, Kentucky, or maneuvering through downtown traffic, Ray's roadster puts him in complete control. From the comfort of its low-set leather seats to its combination of classic roadster styling and uniquely modern curves, the Z4 sets a sleek new standard for sports roadsters. In the Z4, Ray's second BMW in as many years, the financially minded executive can shift gears—literally. He loves the power of his five-speed and the responsiveness of its light-weight alloy six-cylinder engine. An added bonus? The Z4 includes just enough cargo space to hold the necessities for a weekend getaway with his wife. But Ray discovered even more than a high-performance sports car at BMW. He credits the sales and service team for making his shopping experience as smooth as the ride he now enjoys.

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